

THE  
CORSICANS:

*A DRAMA,*  
IN FOUR ACTS.

---

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

OF

AUGUSTUS KOTZEBUE.

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DUBLIN:

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FOR BURNET, WOGAN, PORTER, J. MOORE, W. JONES, RICE,  
M'KENZIE, DORNIN, FOLINGSBY, FITZPATRICK,  
KELLY, BURNSIDE, STOCKDALE AND  
GRAISBERRY.

1799.



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FRANCI  
OTTILI  
WACKE  
FELIX,  
ROSINA  
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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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THE COUNT, *an Hungarian Nobleman.*

NATALIA, *his Daughter.*

FRANCIS, *his Son, a Captain in the Imperial Service.*

OTTILIA, *Wife to Francis.*

WACKER, *the Count's Steward.*

FELIX, *his Son.*

ROSINA, *the Gardener's Daughter.*

SERVANTS.

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*The Scene is in Hungary, at the Count's Seat.—*

*The period of it falls about the first half of the eighteenth century.*

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# THE CORSICANS.

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## ACT I.

*A Hall in the Gothic style, hung with huge family portraits.*

## SCENE I.

OTTILIA alone [*knitting a child's stocking, her sorrowful look fixed on the picture of a young Officer*].

THOU smilest so friendly on me—art thou still among the living, my sweet Francis?—  
[*Sighs, wipes her eyes, and continues knitting; then drops her hands on her knees, and again looks up to the picture.*] That is the very look with which thou didst conquer my heart. So serenely thou didst smile on the morning of our wedding-day; so thou wilt smile at thy return—  
—[*in a tone of melancholy.*] With thou return?  
—Oh!—[*During this soliloquy a servant keeps going to and fro, lays the breakfast cloth, and serves breakfast*].

Ott. John!

Serv. Madam!

Ott. Didn't you also hear the firing last night?

Serv. No, Madam! [*A pause, during which the servant arranges the tea-things.*]

B

Ott.

*Ott.* Did you hear nothing ?

*Serv.* Nothing.

*Ott.* At a distance, I mean—towards the Danube—immediately after midnight—it was a heavy cannonade.

*Serv.* May be. When I am asleep, were a cannon fired at my ear I should not hear it. *[Exit.*

*Ott.* They were all fast asleep; love alone was awake in my lonely chamber—the distant thunder pursued only me.

## SCENE II.

*Enter NATALIA.*

*Nat.* Good morrow, dear sister ! Have the larks roused you, or you the larks ?

*Ott.* Oh, dear Natalia ! Did you hear nothing either ?

*Nat.* Hear what ?

*Ott.* The firing till towards morning.

*Nat.* Where ?

*Ott.* I don't know. Downwards along the Danube, or on the other side of it. Shot after shot.

*Nat.* Well.

*Ott.* Francis is your brother, and you can ask such a question !

*Nat.* But firing is nothing extraordinary in this country. The cuckoo is no more the harbinger of spring with us ; it is now ushered in by the roar of cannon.

*Ott.* I am sure, Francis was in the engagement.

*Nat.* Very likely. And if so, he has again bravely fought, rushed on sabre in hand. Prince Eugene

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Eugene has witnessed his deeds, admired and promoted him.

*Ott.* And if his courage has carried him too far—if he is dead—

*Nat.* Nonsense! Ask the old butler: when any one of our noble family dies, his portrait drops from the wall the night before. And look'ee; there is Francis hanging as before.

*Ott.* Don't take it amiss, sister; but your jest is unseasonable.

*Nat.* The same as your sighs. But let's talk of something else. Has Rosina—

*Ott.* Suppose he is only wounded, or taken prisoner?

*Nat.* He'll never suffer that. None but Ottilia could fetter such a hot-headed spark. Now tell me, has Rosina been here?

*Ott.* I had a horrid, sleepless night. Every report of the cannon penetrated to my heart. I buried my head under the pillow, yet the sound of the bullets seemed to whistle in my ears. I shut my eyes, and saw the flashing of sabres. I rose and opened the window towards the garden. I listened to hear the nightingale's sweet lays; but heard only the thunder of artillery, and shrunk back.—Oh! perhaps that very report was the harbinger of the death of my Francis.

*Nat.* Both hope and fear spurn at restraint, when led on by the hand of love.

*Ott.* My little boy slumbered sweetly: but my anguish steeled my heart against every sentiment of feeling, and compelled me to wake him. I wanted one creature at least to be awake near me. I took him up, and shook him, thinking he would cry. God hear his cries, and protect his father! But the little infant was so drowsy, that he could not keep his eyes open.



*Nat.* Poor child !

*Ott.* Poor mother !

*Nat.* Don't distress yourself before the time, If any thing has happened, we shall learn it to-day. Now answer me—

*Ott.* Let us take a walk along the high road after breakfast. We may chance to meet with comier or a fugitive.

*Nat.* Yes, yes. Has Rosina been here yet?

*Ott.* No.

*Nat.* Do you know, that yesterday for the first time young Wacker left his room?

*Ott.* [*with indifference*] So!

*Nat.* He has been sitting at his door.

*Ott.* So!

*Nat.* To-day, he thought he might be able to go out.

*Ott.* So!

*Nat.* So! so! What foes of yours these are!

*Ott.* Forgive me, sister! I have only one thought to-day.

*Nat.* Saviour of my life! thou art out of danger! Heaven be thanked! he is recovered. Poor Natalia! what reward canst thou offer to the generous youth?

*Ott.* I think, your father will provide for him.

*Nat.* What do you call provide? rive him down to some office? promote him to some quill-driving employ? get him to copy letters? or confine his sublime genius to cast accounts?

*Ott.* [*smiling*.] His sublime genius!

*Nat.* [*vexed*.] Yes, yes! his sublime genius. My dear Ottavia, don't vex me. You are just such another as my father; he, like you, will remain indifferent and cold, when I speak of rewarding a man who braved certain death to save the life of his only daughter.

*Ott.*

*Ott.*

*Nat.*

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*Ott.* Indeed, he ventured much.

*Nat.* [*with vivacity.*] Oh sister! if you had seen at what rate the six Neapolitan horses ran away with me;—how the coachman was thrown, and the postillion dragged along;—how they galloped up the hill snorting, dashed over stocks and stones, and with every step approached nearer and nearer the precipice that hangs over the Danube! Indeed, Ottilia, had not the adventurous youth heard my helpless cries, I should have been lost. Ah! methinks I see him yet, how he rushed from the bushes, flung away his book, threw himself amidst the wild animals, and with both his hands clung to the reins. In that situation they dragged him over roots and rocks, but he never quitted his hold. I saw the blood gush in streams from his wounds—I lost my recollection—I fainted—but he never quitted his hold. When I recovered, the horses had stopped on the brink of the abyss; lifeless he lay among them, and held with a convulsive grasp the bit of the saddle-horse. With a shriek of anguish I leaped from the carriage—I was quite frantic—attempted to pull him away and disengage his hands; but he was half dead, and yet never quitted his hold!—At last some people came to my assistance, and he was carried home. He had five wounds on his head, one of his legs bruised, and both his hands covered with gashes—a full week was his life in danger.

*Ott.* Aye, aye! you have repeatedly told me all this.

*Nat.* And each time without affecting your heart.

*Ott.* Who told you so?

*Nat.* Your smiles, your indifference.

Ott. You are mistaken. Nay, I have even been thinking of a recompense for your young champion.

Nat. [*jeering.*] Have you indeed? Let's hear?

Ott. His father is an old man; suppose we give him a pension, and make his son steward in his stead?

Nat. Quite a fortune!

Ott. And marry him to Rosina?

Nat. [*with vivacity.*] To Rosina, the gardener's daughter?

Ott. Yes, yes; to the gardener's daughter.

Nat. [*vexed*] You talk nonsense.

Ott. There is however no such great distance from the gardener to the steward.

Nat. Rosina is but a child.

Ott. Fourteen years and seven weeks old.

Nat. Without a single accomplishment.

Ott. But pretty, and a good housewife.

Nat. And is that enough for a man like Wacker?

Ott. Do you know him so well?

Nat. At least better than you do.

Ott. That is saying very little; for I know nothing at all of him.

Nat. That's the very thing. Had you been longer than four weeks in this house—had you been here before that event, you would often have seen him in the park, and never without a book in his hand.

Ott. And what does he read?

Ott. I don't know. But he reads, and Rosina can scarcely spell.

Ott. If that be of any importance to him, he will soon teach her to read.

Nat. No! I tell you, no! That is of no importance to him.

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Ott. But she visits him every day.

Nat. Because I send her; because I wish to know if he has every thing he wants.

Ott. But on that occasion—

Nat. There is no occasion

Ott. They may lay the foundation for a romance.

Nat. Oh nonsense!

Ott. And yet it appears to me—

Nat. [quick.] What appears to you, pray?

Ott. As if Rosina were not altogether indifferent—

Nat. Good heavens! The child takes him for a doll.

Ott. If your father would give her something handsome for her portion—

Nat. [vexed.] Don't talk so, pray! Your discourse shews, that you have had a sleepless night.

Ott. Aye, aye! But it would appear, sister, that you almost have a mind to bestow your hand upon him yourself.

Nat. [sighing.] Ah, no! Alas! I know but too well that I am a Countess.

Ott. You know it as yet; but I am afraid you'll forget it.

Nat. If I could do so, his respect would remind me of it.

### SCENE III.

*Enter ROSINA.*

Ros. [with a basket of flowers.] I wish you a good morning; and here I have brought flowers for my right honourable countesses, roses and violets, geranium muscatum, and sage for the gums.

Nat.



**Nat.** How does your patient ?

**Ros.** My patient is no longer ill ; he only looks a little pale yet, and he is not the worse for that.

**Nat.** Will he go out to-day ?

**Ros.** Oh sure. Yesterday he took three turns up and down the chestnut avenue.

**Nat.** Yesterday ? and you only tell me so to-day ?

**Ros.** I could not get out.

**Nat.** And what mighty business might Miss have ?

**Ros.** I was obliged to attend him.

**Nat.** Attend him ? Obligated !

**Ros.** Aye, he would have it so ; and I did it with pleasure.

**Nat.** Did you indeed ?

**Ros.** [*assenting cordially.*] Indeed, indeed ! whatever he wishes, I do it with pleasure.

**Ott.** You seem to be very fond of him ?

**Ros.** To be sure ! He is so handsome, and his marks don't disfigure him at all.

**Nat.** Has he any marks ?

**Ros.** A large scar on his forehead, and a small one on his cheek, and that small one will exactly form a dimple when he smiles.

**Ott.** [*archly.*] Only think, what remarks children will make !

**Ros.** His eyes are like the violet, his lips like apple-blossoms, and his teeth like the narcissus.

**Nat.** Child, it were better for you to learn your catechism, than to look so often at his violet eyes.

**Ros.** Yes, he will often have me say my catechism to him. But it is rather odd ; when I am at home, I know every syllable of it ; and  
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when he desires me to repeat it, I often don't recollect a single word.

*Nat.* He makes you say your catechism?

*Ros.* Yes, twice a-week.

*Nat.* He might do something better, and wiser too.

*Ros.* Ave, he has promised to make me wiser.

*Nat.* You are wise enough for your age.

*Ros.* I used to think so too; but in his presence I now and then look upon myself as very ignorant. It is lucky, however, that he is so good-natured, and that he likes me no worse for it.

*Nat.* [*quick.*] How d'ye know that?

*Ros.* I should be very stupid indeed if I did not see it. He will often sit quite dejected in a corner; but as soon as I step in, he becomes cheerful.

*Nat.* Presumptuous thing!

*Ros.* Then he will take me by the hand, and chat for hours together.

*Nat.* And of what, pray?

*Ros.* Him! of many things; but chiefly of you, my most gracious Countess!

*Nat.* Of me?

*Ros.* I must tell him, how you are; of what you talk with me; and if you often speak of him.

*Nat.* And what do you tell him then?

*Ros.* Why, I tell him that you frequently, very frequently, speak of him.

*Nat.* You gossip!

*Ros.* And then he wants to know when your birth-day will come.

*Nat.* What is that to him?

*Ros.* Not long ago when the strange gentleman was here, to whom you play'd so much  
on

on the harpsichord, he wanted me to tell him what you had sung. But at this time he was quite in a bad humour.

*Nat.* For what?

*Ros.* I can't tell. Perhaps his wounds pained him. And for three days after he spoke of nothing but the strange gentleman.

*Nat.* Does he know him?

*Ros.* No; but he thought, we might soon have a wedding in the house.

*Nat.* And what did you answer?

*Ros.* I said that perhaps might be the case:

*Nat.* But, you foolish girl! there is no such thing.

*Ros.* Ah, I didn't know that! But I will tell him so this very day.

*Nat.* You may let that alone; for it is no business of his.

*Ros.* But he would be very glad to see you happy. He often says so.

*Nat.* Does he say so?

*Ros.* He once even cried when he said so.

*Nat.* He cried?

*Ros.* I saw his tears, though he wished to hide them.

*Nat.* [*affectedly aside.*] He cried!

*Ros.* The other day, when I carried him the preserved fruit, he would scarcely look at it: but when he learned, that it came from you, he coloured as red as fire, and—and——

*Nat.* Well! and——?

*Ros.* [*blushing.*] And then he gave me a kiss.

*Nat.* A kiss?—Ay!—But he gave you more than one, I suppose?

*Ros.* Oh no! no more than one. His father came upon us.

*Nat.* And if his father had not come—  
*Ros.*

*Ros.* He is a nasty rough man, who grumbles and scolds; and looks just like my father, when the moles have been busy in his hot-beds. Sometimes they will talk gibberish together, quite like the gypsies: no Christian could make out a single word of it.

*Nat.* Go, Rosina: tell him not to forget, when he goes out, to come up to the castle. Do you hear?

*Ros.* Who? The father?

*Nat.* No—No:—The son.

*Ros.* Oh, he will come without being called. He said yesterday that he must go and thank you.

*Nat.* Thank me!—For what?

*Ros.* For the medicine, soups, fruit, and flowers.

*Ott.* Did you send him all those things?

*Nat.* To be sure.—Could I suffer the saviour of my life to want any thing?

*Ros.* I will however go directly, and say that my gracious Countess has ordered—

*Nat.* To be sure; by these means you will see him.

*Ros.* Oh yes!—I like so much to see him.

[*Skips off.*]

## SCENE IV.

NATALIA and OTTILIA.

*Ott.* Ay, ay, sister?

*Nat.* What do you mean?

*Ott.* If any stranger had witnessed all this—

*Nat.* I don't care.

*Ott.* He would swear that you are in love with the son of your steward.

*Nat.* And would be much mistaken.

*Ott.*

*Ott.* Heaven grant it !

*Nat.* I should detest myself, were I ungrateful.

*Ott.* Gratitude is often nothing else than love in disguise.

*Nat.* And suppose it be, is it my fault that countesses are not dipped in the Styx, to make them invulnerable, like Achilles ?

*Ott.* Were that the case, O Natalia ! what an endless thread of misery thou would'st have spurn for thyself ! Your father is a good man, but he is proud.

*Nat.* I might answer, he would have cause to be proud of such a son-in-law.—But be easy. I shall never forget what I owe to my father and the world.

*Ott.* My own experience inspires me with diffidence.

*Nat.* Your case was very different from mine.

*Ott.* Like you, I was in love before I was aware ; and, like you, I confided in my own strength.

*Nat.* Had the ancestors of this youth, taken some fortiefs, or cut off the heads of a few Saracens——

*Ott.* [*smiling.*] They may have been Saracens themselves, for aught we know. What do you say of the strange language of these dubious people ?

*Nat.* It likely was French they spoke.

*Ott.* I hardly think so. Rosina—I don't pretend to say—would perhaps have understood it ; but as she hears us daily talk French in the family, she would at least not have taken it for the language of the gypsies. I sometimes think——

*Nat.* What ?

*Ott.*



*Ott.* When I combine several other little remarks of mine——

*Nat.* Dear Ottilia, what do you think?

*Ott.* That I can discover a countryman of mine in your young champion.

*Nat.* A Corsican?

*Ott.* Who knows? Your father now and then talks politics with his steward. Not long ago, the conversation happened to turn on Corsica:—the old man worked himself quite up into a passion; inveighed so against the Genoese; and then of a sudden appeared so alarmed, as if he had betrayed himself.

*Nat.* Oh! be Felix born wherever he may, his native land must be proud of him!

## SCENE V.

*Enter COUNT.*

*Count.* Good morrow, children! [*Natalia kisses his hand: Ottilia attempts to do the same; but he withdraws his hand, and impresses a kiss on her forehead.*] Look how the gnats have stung me. I like to sleep with my windows open; but I must purchase fresh air with my blood.

*Nat.* Did you hear the nightingales?

*Ott.* And the cannon?

*Count.* This shews that the one is yet unmarried, and that the husband of the other is an officer: the one hears the nightingale, the other the cannon. I have heard neither.

*Ott.* Oh, then you were more fortunate than I.

*Count.* Are you in earnest? [*Surveying her with attention.*] Either the gnats have stung your eyes, or you have been weeping.

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*Ott.*



Ott. My anguish—that heavy cannonade—

Count. Where?

Ott. From the quarter of the Danube, all the night through.

Count. Indeed!—Again?—Hm! hm!—  
[Shaking his head, and sitting down at the table.] I should think they had yet corpses enough to bury. [A servant brings him a pipe of tobacco.]

Count. John, did you hear any thing? The cannon, they say, have been roaring last night.

Serv. Two couriers passed through just now. There has been an action.

Count. An action!

Serv. A very serious one, they say.

Count. Well, well!—How serious?

Serv. On our side, five hundred killed and three hundred wounded.

Count. Hold your tongue!

Serv. A number of prisoners; thirty officers—

Count. Hold your tongue!

Serv. The Turks very likely have—[Makes gestures as if cutting off heads.]

Count. Go to the devil! [Throws his pipe at his feet]

Serv. [Picks up the pieces, and exit.]

Ott. [Wringing her hands.] Almighty God!

Count. Be easy, be easy! There may not have been so much mischief done after all.—  
[He endeavours to conceal his apprehensions, and fills his cup; but his hand trembles.]

Not. D ar father, let me—

Count. Why?

Nat. You tremble!

Count. What is that to you? I have often enough shewn my face to the enemy, and never

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ver trembled in my life. But then—I had no children!

*Ott. [aside, in silent anguish.]* Oh God!

*Count. [casts a side-glance at her, and sets down his cup.]* Who could get his breakfast down in this manner?—Was'nt I right in saying that our globe is a bungled piece of work made by some monkey of an angel after his master's better model?—The weevil devours the harvest—the canker nips the bud—the hail beats down the corn.—In the winter the frost destroys the vineyards; and in the spring men kill men, to occupy the little spot on which the frozen vines have stood.

*Ott.* I am sure my Francis was in the action.

*Count.* I dare say he was. You would not have him stay with the baggage?

*Ott.* Five hundred killed!

*Count.* That's better than so many cowards.

*Ott.* Three hundred wounded!

*Count.* If my son be among the number, I'll lay he has not a wound in his back.

*Ott.* Thirty officers made prisoners!

*Count.* But who knows if all this be true? A courier and a liar are near kinsman.

*Ott.* Oh, the war! the war!

*Count.* Ah, it would indeed be much better if the Abbé St. Pierre commanded the army. We might then soon celebrate an eternal peace.

## SCENE VI.

*Enter WACKER.*

*Count.* Welcome, dear Wacker: what good news do you bring us?

*Wack.* Your excellency, old Steffanson must go to prison.

*Count.* That old man!—Why so?

*Wack.* For negligence and disobedience.

*Count.* I hav'nt sent a peasant to prison these twenty years.

*Wack.* And hence every peasant acts the lord.

*Count.* Very possible: but then they only act.

*Wack.* He must be made an example of.

*Count.* Good Wacker, I have but one prison. If the key of it be not lost, it ought to be aired a couple of days, before we can lock up a man in it.

*Wack.* Then I'll order the fellow two dozen of lashes.

*Count.* I am not fond of lashes.

*Wack.* Nor I; but who can govern men without them?

*Count.* Don't make mankind so bad.

*Wack.* They are a good for-nothing set.

*Count.* I am pleased well enough with man; but the world is good for nothing.

*Wack.* It would be a paradise, if not inhabited by man.

*Count.* A pretty paradise indeed! Here a volcano, and there a deluge of ashes! Here an ocean, and there an earthquake!

*Wack.* Behold, on these ruins, a few thousand fools who cut each others throats!

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*Count.* An agreeable harmony of eternal ice and scorching heat !

*Wack.* The elements are easier ruled than man !

*Count.* If you speak so from experience, I pity you. There is an excellent method of ruling man—

*Wack.* By fear and severity.

*Count.* Kindness, my good Wacker. It bears the interest of love.

*Wack.* Love is a stranger to obedience.

*Count.* Love has no occasion for obedience ; it performs its part before it is bid.

*Wack.* With these principles——

*Count.* My tenants have been happy, and I still happier. After the battle of Peterwaradin, when a troop of fugitive Turks had set fire to my castle, this same Steffanson gave me shelter for three days ; and you would now have me lock him up in a dungeon ?

*Wack.* He has neglected your service.

*Count.* What is his excuse ?

*Wack.* Hm !—His daughter was brought to bed.

*Count.* Well then, my dear steward, he ought to be forgiven.

*Wack.* So !—What business has a father with the lying-in of his daughter ?

*Count.* Perhaps she was in danger.

*Wack.* He says so, sure enough.

*Count.* Ay ! then we will pardon him.

*Wack.* [with a sarcastic grin.] On account of a daughter——

*Count.* You are not fond of daughters, it seems ?

*Wack.* Not I, indeed ! I hope the ladies won't take it amiss ; but I am not fond of daughters.



*Nat.* Why not?

*Wack.* Why, what are they good for? When they grow up, they are mad till they get husbands.

*Count.* So much the better.

*Wack.* And when they are married, they forget their parents.

*Nat.* That is not the fashion here in Hungary.

*Count.* The father, who with tenderness and care chooses for his children—

*Wack.* And do fathers always choose for their children? Daughters will now and then elope with vagabonds. A father's tears will not quench the flames of love; and a lovesick girl little cares whether her father lingers out a melancholy life or not—whether he bless or curse his child.

*Ott.* [*Appears evidently hurt by this discourse.*]

*Nat.* Your picture is that of an unnatural child.

*Wack.* There are plenty of them.

*Nat.* Have you a daughter?

*Wack.* I? [*with emphasis.*] No. I have no daughter.

*Nat.* If you had one, you would speak in a different manner.

*Wack.* If I did, I should be a fool, as deserving of punishment as old Steffanson.—It is then settled, your Excellency?

*Count.* I is.

*Wack.* The fellow is to receive no punishment?

*Count.* No punishment.

*Wack.* Well; be it so—

*Exit.*

SCENE



## SCENE VII.

COUNT, NATALIA, OTTILIA.

*Count.* That man is an excellent steward,  
but a misanthrope. And that I don't like.

*Nat.* What do you weep for, dear Ottilia?

*Ott.* [*Sobs, and is unable to answer.*]

*Nat.* Good Heaven! Sister, what is the  
matter with you?

*Count.* How can you ask such a silly ques-  
tion? She suffers on account of your brother.

*Nat.* No, no; something else is the matter.

*Ott.* And you cannot guess what it is? You,  
who know me so well?

*Nat.* [*half aloud.*] I hope that old grumbler  
has not—

*Ott.* He has broken my heart!

*Count.* Who?—My steward?

*Ott.* He has violently roused my slumbering  
conscience.

*Count.* Who?—Old Wacker?

*Ott.* What he said of unfeeling daughters—

*Count.* How can that affect you?

*Nat.* [*nodding to her.*] Very right. How  
can that affect you, sister?

*Ott.* Oh! it was perhaps the echo of my  
own father's words!

*Count.* I am inclined to think, daughter, that  
the cannonade has deranged you a little.

*Nat.* [*giving her her arm.*] Come, let's go  
and take a walk.

*Ott.* No! be the consequence what it may,  
I cannot now conceal any thing.

*Count.* Have you then concealed any thing  
from me?

*Count.*

Ott. I too had a father—

Count. To be sure; but he died when you was a child.

Ott. I hope—he is alive still.

Count. (*with astonishment.*) What?

Ott. (*taking him by the hand.*) I have deceived you—

Count. That was wrong.

Ott. I am not an orphan—

Count. Why did you conceal that from me?

Ott. Hadn't we enough to accuse ourselves of besides?

Count. You had better tell the whole at once.

Ott. Married without your knowledge—

Count. Sure! That was not right.

Ott. And what if I add, that we were so out my father's consent also?

Count. Without his consent?—hm! that vexes me. What objection could he have to my son?—Did he know him?

Ott. Oh! he did not even know his own daughter.

Count. How?—What do you mean?

Ott. After my mother's death; ever since my fourth year I was left to the care of an old aunt in France—

Count. Very well; that I know.

Ott. There I got acquainted with my Francis, and fell in love with him.

Count. I know. Instead of making the tour of Europe, he stopt at a paltry French town. And the rogue dated all his letters either from Rome or Naples.

Ott. I knew my father's aversion to all foreigners.

Count. Curse on that national pride!

Ott. With a trembling hand, I ventured  
many

many a significant expression in my letters, to sound his opinion—

*Count.* And he understood them—

*Ott.* But too well ! For, after a few paternal admonitions, he suddenly apprized me, that ever since my twelfth year he had destined me for one of his friends.

*Count.* Suddenly, and yet too late ! Was it not so ?

*Ott.* I made one more attempt. I intreated—he threatened. I wished to go to a convent. He wrote to my aunt, that he would fetch me, as soon as tranquillity should be restored to our file.

*Count.* I see now what is to follow.—You did not choose to wait for his arrival.

*Ott.* To crown all, my good, tender-hearted aunt died suddenly ; and then my fears, my perilous situation, added to love and entreaties, induced me to take a step for which, even in the lap of prosperity, I shall never forgive myself.

*Count.* At all events you was guilty of great rashness. I might use a still harsher expression, daughter ; but, alas ! I am afraid my son was more culpable than you.

*Ott.* We were privately married—and I took refuge in a convent.

*Count.* But why did not you come straight to me ?

*Ott.* My Francis wished to prepare his good father—

*Count.* And his good father was fool enough to write a letter of compliments to the dead aunt.

*Ott.* Oh ! did you but know what extasy that letter brought to my monastic solitude ? I received it a few days after the birth of my son.

*Count.*

*Count.* Very well. But what became of your father ?

*Ott.* Oh ! what became of him ? I don't know.

*Count.* What ? You never since made any enquiries after him ?

*Ott.* I have ever since weekly wrote the most penitent letters to him. Whether he received them, I cannot tell.

*Count.* Did you receive no answer ?

*Ott.* None.

*Count.* The Genoese are playing the deuce in Corsica. Your father was a patriot ; God knows where he may have fled to.

*Ott.* My brother observes the same silence.

*Count.* Your brother ? Your family keeps increasing apace.

*Ott.* My only brother ! an excellent youth !

*Count.* You know him ?

*Ott.* Three years have nearly elapsed since he paid me a visit in France. Before that time I knew neither father nor mother. But a few weeks were sufficient to form the most tender fraternal tie between me and Camillo.—No, he has not forgot me ! My letters have miscarried ; that 's the only wretched consolation I have.

*Count.* And probably that consolation will not prove vain.

*Ott.* There is a report that my father's estates have been seized, and he himself banished. Oh ! who knows but he now wanders in poverty and distress from place to place !—I have in vain looked for his name in the newspapers.—Oh ! grief on account of his country and his daughter have thrown him on a bed of sickness—Me-thinks I now see him forsaken by all the world—hear his groans—his curses.

*Count.*



*Count.* Compose yourself.—We will write, enquire, send off messengers—

*Oct.* Oh! all mortal happiness flies from him whose head is loaded with the curses of a father!

[*Exit in tears.*]

## SCENE VIII.

COUNT, NATALIA.

*Count.* True! very true! and for that reason, my dear child, thou deservest the sorrow that weighs thee down.—Yet I pity thee.

*Nat.* She suffers beyond all expression.

*Count.* Francis! Francis! where was thy honour—thy conscience?

*Nat.* [*excusing.*] Love—

*Count.* Love, aye? Don't profane the only thing that here below seems to be of heavenly origin. You silly girls take an idol of your own creation; deck it out with your wretched passions; hold it up to public view, and then say: this is Love.—Love, my dear Miss! is as intimately united with virtue and a noble mind, as fragrance is with a rose.

*Nat.* Perhaps love is oftener profaned by caprice and prejudice than by the passions; and the former compels lovers sometimes to appear under a less noble character.

*Count.* You talk as if you had a mind to run away also.

*Nat.* God forbid! My worthy father has not promised me to any of his friends.

*Count.* That you don't know.

*Nat.* He will consult my heart.

*Count.*

*Count.* Hearts, my girls, are bad counsellors !

*Nat.* Aye sure, if they are expected to vote always in the affirmative.

*Count.* Well, Natalia ; if I thought you capable of playing me a similar trick, I should wish that my Neapolitans had broke your neck.

*Nat.* You now remind me of an event which lies very heavy on my heart.

*Count.* How ?

*Nat.* Without the assistance of that noble youth I should have been lost ; and as yet he has received no token of my gratitude.

*Count.* That is my concern.

*Nat.* He is cured.

*Count.* I am glad of it.

*Nat.* To-day he will go out for the first time.

*Count.* I must see him.

*Nat.* What will you do for him ?

*Count.* We'll consider.

*Nat.* He is a young man who has received a good education.

*Count.* So much the better.

*Nat.* He possesses knowledge.

*Count.* Of what kind.

*Nat.* His knowledge is universal, I presume.

*Count.* I doubt it.

*Nat.* I have several times conversed with him—

*Count.* And then he made a shew of it.

*Nat.* No, sir ; but I presume—

*Count.* And I presume, that you are a fool.

*Nat.* I had rather be a fool than guilty of ingratitude.

*Count.* Do you suspect your father of ingratitude ? Am not I a man of wealth ?

*Nat.* There is a difference between reward and gratitude.

*Count.*

**Count.** Then, you give him thanks; I will reward him.

**Nat.** In what manner?

**Count.** Perhaps he would like to embrace one of the learned professions: if so, we'll send him to the university; make a lawyer of him, and entrust him with the administration of justice on our estates.

**Nat.** Oh! that is such an uniform snail-like life.

**Count.** Well then, for the sake of a little variety, we'll give him a pretty girl for a wife.

**Nat.** Ah—then—

**Count.** What do you say to your chambermaid? She is a sweet girl.

**Nat.** A nice little chick—

**Count.** Nature has bestowed a pretty face on her; suppose I assist nature with a couple of thousand dollars?

**Nat.** If young Wacker inclines—

**Count.** Young people are always inclined to marry.

**Nat.** My uncle, the general, may perhaps get him a commission—

**Count.** Aye, very likely!—A commission to a plebeian!

**Nat.** Hasn't he been ennobled by his glorious action?

**Count.** (*smiling.*) Glorious action!

**Nat.** (*with vivacity.*) Is it not so?

**Count.** It is so to me and you, no doubt. But what does the country care if there be a pert countess more or less in the world?

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SCENE

## SCENE IX.

*Enter SERVANT.*

*Serv.* A courier, who passed here, has left this parcel. *[Exit.]*

*Count.* *[looks eagerly at the direction.]* From my brother.

*Nat.* The General ?

*Count.* Yes.

*Nat.* Accounts from Francis ?

*Count.* Very likely. *[Puts the parcel before him on the table, and appears much agitated.]*

*Nat.* Why don't you open the parcel ?

*Count.* I will.

*Nat.* I hope you have no apprehensions—

*Count.* I fear and hope every thing.

*Nat.* Shall I call my sister-in-law ?

*Count.* A great deal too soon.

*Nat.* Perhaps there is a letter in it from my brother.

*Count.* The direction is not by his hand.

*Nat.* Shall I step aside and open the parcel ?

*Count.* No.

*Nat.* But how can you torment yourself and me so long ?

*Count.* Whoever, agitated by fear and hope, waits for his death warrant or his pardon, longs for the decisive moment, and yet slips with a slow pace into the presence of his judge.—I have only this son—he is a brave man—I love him—who can say but, when I open this parcel—Go, Natalia ; leave me by myself.

*Nat.* Dear father !—

*Count.* I entreat you.

*Nat.*



Nat. I cannot possibly leave you at this critical moment.

Count. (*earnest.*) I wish to be alone.

[Natalia *exit*.]

## SCENE X.

COUNT *by himself*.

If my Francis be dead, I will have neither relief nor consolation. But if he be alive, all the world shall rejoice with me, as if he were new-born.—[*Staring at the parcel.*] I am yet a rich man—the next minute I may be more wretched than yon poor labourer, whose boys help him to carry wood. What prevents me to break the seal?—what palsies my hand?—Be quick!—[*Tears the cover across, but leaves the parcel on the table.*] It is open. Who says that the heart of an old man is not susceptible of violent emotions?—(*His anguish drives him about the room; but he again comes to the table.*) Such exactly was the shape of the letter which apprized me of the death of my wife.—But why should that just now occur to me?—(*He suddenly takes his hat from the wall, and covers the parcel with it.*) So—now compose thyself; don't be a child! It must be known some time.—Uncertainty is a kind of slow poison—rather thrust the dagger into thy breast at once—(*He flings away his hat, pulls the inclosed letters out of the parcel, and scatters them about on the table.*) There they lie—all—all. (*His look wanders anxiously about.*)—News—and lists of the killed—and—and (*calling out aloud.*) a letter from my son!—(*He throws himself on the table, grasps the letter with both hands, holds it up to heaven with expressions of thanks-*  

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giving

*giving, presses it to his lips, and wipes his eyes.]*  
 He lives ! — I thank thee, O God ! — *[Opens the letter slowly, and reads by intervals.]* “ We are victorious — I was in danger — my good fortune and my courage have saved me — my regiment fought bravely — Prince Eugene embraced me on the field of battle. — I have leave of absence for twenty-four hours — this evening I shall be with you — don’t tell my wife and sister — I’ll surprise them.” *[Pause. His gestures express the heartfelt pleasure of a father, and gratitude to God. — He rings the bell.]*

## SCENE XI.

*Enter SERVANT.*

*Count.* You know the old woman whose son was lately shot ?

*Serv.* Yes.

*Count.* You know where she lives ?

*Serv.* The second house in the village.

*Count.* Go, and carry her this purse. *[Gives him a full purse ; puts the letter in his bosom, and exit.]*

*Serv.* *(Shaking the purse.)* A great deal of gold — but no son for all that ! *[Exit.]*

ACT

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.

COUNT, NATALIA, OTTILIA.

*Count sitting at the table, having just perused the remaining papers.**Natalia and Ottilia, peeping through the door.*

NATALIA.

**M**AY we come now, dear father?*Count. [in a cheerful humour.]* Aye, why not?*[Natalia and Ottilia rush in, and ask questions very rapidly in turns.]**Nat.* Well, how is it?*Ott.* Good news?*Nat.* How fares Francis?*Ott.* Is he alive?*Nat.* Was he in the action?*Ott.* Not wounded, I hope?*Nat.* Or made prisoner?*Count.* There is gabbling for you, as if the Capitol were in danger.*Nat.* Oh, be quick! tell me—*Ott.* I tremble with joy!*Nat.* And I with curiosity.*Count.* I am sorry for it.*Ott.* } Why so?*Nat.* }*Count.* Because I am tongue-tied.*Nat.* You joke.*Ott.* You torture me.

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*Nat.*

*Nat.* [*stroking his chin.*] Good father! don't be so mysterious, like a free-mason.

*Count.* The simile is ill chosen; for I really have a mystery.

*Ott.* [*On the other side of his chair kisses and strokes his hand.*] Dear father, pity my anguish!

*Count.* I dare not. I should like to be taken for a young man yet. But if I blab, people will say: The Count there in the castle must be far gone in years; for he prates like a child.

*Nat.* [*renewing her caresses.*] Father, I will with my own hand embroider a saddle-cloth for your Arabian horse.

*Count.* Now they wish to bribe me!

*Ott.* Pray! pray! I'll help you to decorate your grotto with shells.

*Count.* The deuce! there is no withstanding that. Well; if you absolutely insist on knowing, then listen. The Turks—[*hears.*]

*Nat.* } [*in eager expectation.*] Well?

*Ott.*

*Count* [*very serious.*] The Turks, you know are Mussulmen——

*Nat.* And Mahomedans into the bargain.

*Count.* They are very fond of handsome girls——

*Nat.* But that's no news.

*Count.* And to make sure of their victory, they have sent five hundred Circassians into the German camp, with orders to seduce all the young married men.

*Ott.* [*showing gentle symptoms of displeasure at her disappointment*] And you keep up the joke?

*Count.* My brother informs me, that Francis sits in the very middle of them, and has no time to write.

*Ott.*



*Ott.* I know what I must do. I'll go and fetch my little Charles; he shall beg and entreat till grandpapa tells him all he knows. [*Exit.*]

*Nat.* Dear father, I am angry.

*Count.* You?

*Nat.* Very angry indeed.

*Count.* Indeed?

*Nat.* Before you opened the letter, you were yourself highly perplexed. And so you know well enough how one must feel——

*Count.* I am his father.

*Nat.* And I am his sister.

*Count.* You see that I am easy.

*Nat.* Thanks to Heaven!

*Count.* When the father is easy, the sister may sit down to her harpsichord, and play a Swabian dance.

*Nat.* But female curiosity!

*Count.* You could n't be more inquisitive, if a new head-dress had been invented in the army.

## SCENE II.

*Enter SERVANT, then FELIX.*

*Serv.* Young Mr. Wacker is below.

*Nat.* [*is frightened, and betrays great embarrassment.*]

*Count.* Shew him up. [*Servant exit.*] What is the matter with you? You are quite red!

*Nat.* I should blush with shame, were I to receive, without emotion, the man who saved my life.

*Felix.* [*Enters, and bows with dignity.*]

*Count.* Step nearer, young man! Thou art a clever lad. Thou hast ventured much.

*Felix.*

*Felix.* Much, your Excellency ?

*Count.* Thou hast run the risk of losing thy life.

*Fel.* That was not much,

*Count.* What the deuce ! at thy time of life—

*Nat.* [*thrown into the utmost embarrassment by her father's bluntness, and wishing to make up for it.*] I am glad—Mr. Wacker—very glad indeed—to see you well again.

*Fel.* I am not glad, Madam ; for now I have lost my claim to any merit in regard to you.

*Nat.* You have suffered much for my sake.

*Fel.* I am proud of it.

*Count.* Pride is a scanty pittance to live on. I am greatly in your debt.

*Fel.* I am much more indebted to that accident, which gave me an opportunity of becoming useful to so respectable a family.

*Count.* [*Astonished, half aside.*] Hm ! well said ! Your father, it would appear, has given you a good education, my friend !

*Fel.* My Father has always entertained a just sense of his duty.

*Count.* And you do credit to that education.

*Fel.* I have been taught to feel at least how much I am indebted to him and to his tenderness.

*Nat.* Won't you sit down, Mr. Wacker.

*Fel.* [*Thanks her with a bow.*]

*Count.* Tell me, friend ! what can I do for you ?

*Fel.* You have already done so much for my father—

*Count.* Nay ; your father is a diligent and an industrious man ; he does more for me than I do for him. We are now speaking of your own brave action, and our gratitude.

*Fel.*

*Fel.* If I have a title to gratitude, consciousness is my reward.

*Count.* But that won't satisfy me. The life of my only daughter has been saved—

*Fel.* I indeed feel a double satisfaction in having preserved such a daughter to the love of such a father; but—I must confess, your Excellency—that I would have done the same for the child of a peasant.

*Count.* Very well; very proper.

*Fel.* And—I make free to add—that I should have been much hurt, if the parents of that child had thought proper to reward me with any thing but a grateful squeeze of the hand.

*Count.* Aye sure, if the parents were poor country-people—

*Fel.* Rank and wealth in this case make no difference.

*Count.* But I should think, that what the peasant affirms with the squeeze of the hand—

*Fel.* No count can possibly express with greater energy. Pray don't rob me of the sweet conviction of having done something for humanity without any selfish view.

*Count.* Selfish view! who speaks of that? When six frightened Neapolitan horses set off full speed, there was indeed no time to think of selfish views.

*Fel.* Any recompence, let it be what it may, must lessen the value of my desert, which besides is so trifling. You have riches, you have rank. I am poor, and stand in need of something to support me in your presence.

*Count.* [*embarrassed.*] So you will—People indeed are—So you disdain to accept my thanks?

*Fel.* Only the count's—not the father's.

*Count.*

*Fel.*

*Count.* You are a noble young man. We must be better acquainted.

*Nat.* I should think, father, we know him already.

*Count.* I am embarrassed, upon my word—that nothing from me—I must think of some means to get the better of your delicacy.—Meanwhile, were the girl a peasant's daughter, you would be pleased if her parents had gratefully shaken you by the hand? Didn't you say so?—Your hand, Mr. Wacker! [*Shakes him by the hand, and exit.*]

### SCENE III.

NATALIA, FELIX.

(*Pause, during which mutual embarrassment prevails.*)

*Fel.* (*with timidity.*) Madam, by your kind assistance, care and participation, you have rendered the state of a sick man enviable. I might have been tempted to prolong my illness, if the desire of returning you thanks had not exceeded the pleasure I derived from my situation.

*Nat.* You thank me? Well, upon my word that's the world quite reversed.

*Fel.* Past pain is soon forgotten; but your goodness I shall never forget. (*Bows, and attempts to go.*)

*Nat.* I entreat you, Mr. Wacker, to stay a moment longer.—Your principles, Sir, are as delicate as those of the man who is commonly called the last of the Greeks.

*Fel.* If what Philopemen did was an easy task to him, I at least bear some resemblance to him in that respect.

*Nat.*



*Nat.* Confess, Sir, that noble souls are not altogether free from prejudice—

*Fel.* To imagine that there is a man upon earth without a prejudice, is the greatest of all prejudices.

*Nat.* Whoever can confound gratitude with reward—

*Fel.* Is entitled only to the latter.

*Nat.* The heart thanks, the hand rewards. What from a prince is no more than an acknowledgment of desert, becomes, from a good man, the true expression of his feelings. The former the proud mind may disdain to accept; the latter it cannot refuse without wounding the heart that wishes to give an external mark of its internal warmth.

*Fel.* To analyze the most refined sentiments has at all times been the prerogative of the ladies.

*Nat.* As flattery is not refutation, I take it for granted that you have no better arguments to oppose. I now fear no misconstruction. (*Taking a valuable ring from her finger.*) Without embarrassment I venture to request that you will not by a witticism profane this memorial of a friend. (*Presenting the ring.*)

*Fel.* A memorial! do I need one?—memorial of you! Oh! that word *friend*, which you have just uttered, what diamond in the world is sufficient to repay it? What diamond could throw a greater lustre on my soul in the hours of sadness than the reflection that I saved your life? Must I then be doomed, each time I cast a look at my finger, to exclaim: Thou art paid!

*Nat.* Curse upon that hateful word!—No! no! When destiny shall separate us, this ring will recal to your remembrance the image of a friend.

*Fel.*

**Fel.** Oh ! it was not a diamond which engraved that image on my heart.

**Nat.** The cypher of my name is formed of my own hair.

**Fel.** Your hair, encircled with diamonds, would for ever remind me, that Natalia is a countess.

**Nat.** You hurt me.

**Fel.** Fate has planted one single flower in my way ; am I to exchange it for this ring ?

**Nat.** You hurt me exceedingly.

**Fel.** You have destined for me a memorial ! —You do not consider me as an ordinary man —why then should you make me so ordinary a present ? —(*Hesitating.*) What if I were bold enough to name one myself ?

**Nat.** (*highly perplexed.*) If it be in my power to give it —

**Fel.** It is certainly of greater value than this ring ; for it bears the marks of your feeling heart.

**Nat.** I don't understand you —

**Fel.** During the first days after that unfortunate event a violent fever seemed to augment the danger of my situation ; —you Madam ! — Rosina is my voucher — you shed tears for me. — Natalia shed tears for poor Felix ! — Those tears you cannot recal ; you cannot again reduce me to poverty ; no misfortune can rob me of my treasure — Natalia has wept for me ! — Let the physician say what he will, I knew to whom I am indebted for my recovery.

**Nat.** Could you doubt my participation ?

**Fel.** I have examined Rosina ; I have made her repeat a thousand times over the most trifling circumstance. — You wore an azure knot on your bosom : — that knot was bedewed with your tears. Perhaps it is the same you now wear. —

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Ott.

You destine for me a memorial—I will not venture to proceed. [*Pause.*]

[*Nat. in great agitation takes the knot from her breast, and gives it him with a blush.*]

[*Fel. presses the knot with rapture to his lips, and precipitately exit.*]

*Nat. [astonished.]* What have I done? What has my heart done?—[*Going in anguish; meets Ottilia, and throws herself in her arms.*]

## SCENE IV.

NATALIA, OTTILIA.

*Nat.* Ottilia! dear Ottilia! I have been doing a foolish thing.

*Ott.* Natalia! dear Natalia! I have done a hundred of them in my life.

*Nat.* Young Wacker was here just now.

*Ott.* This prelude indeed does not promise much sense.

*Nat.* My father received him with great neglect; but the noble sentiments of the youth inspired him with esteem. He rejected every kind of recompense.

*Ott.* Too much pride for his situation in life.

*Nat.* Don't provoke me: the poor only have a right to be proud.

*Ott.* How did your father take it?

*Nat.* As a man ought who is impressed with a due sense of the dignity of his own nature. He left him: and, at parting, shook him by the hand.—Do you hear, Ottilia! he shook him by the hand.—If he had presented me with the horn of abundance, filled with jewels, it would not have given me so much pleasure.

*Ott.* But the foolish thing you did?

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*Nat.*

*Nat.* [*with a common sigh.*] Only stop; we are coming to it. When my father was gone, we both stood as if going to pick up our words from the ground. I wished to make him a present of this ring, and did'nt know how to go about it. I made a long preamble; but the result was on his part a refusal.

*Ott.* And then you became angry?

*Nat.* Angry with him!—with him who so modestly begged that I would not deprive him of the little merit there might be in what he did!—with him who set more value on my break-knot than on a ring worth a thousand florins!

*Ott.* Your breast-knot?

*Nat.* Rosina had told him, that I wept when he seemed to be so near his grave—that my tears had fallen on that knot——

*Ott.* And is that true?

*Nat.* Most certainly!—Am I a stock, to remain insensible when a man was about to lose his life on my account?

*Ott.* And he requested you to give him that breast-knot?

*Nat.* With faltering accents;—with so much submission—so much modesty——

*Ott.* And you gave it to him?

*Nat.* (*sighing.*) I did.

*Ott.* (*admonishing.*) Sister! sister!

*Nat.* Yes, that was the very foolish thing—

*Ott.* I am afraid you will do many more foolish things.

*Nat.* I feel indeed much disposed——

*Ott.* When we are in love, we seldom stop at the first foolish thing.

*Nat.* In love?

*Ott.* Aye, in love. It is my duty to warn you.

*Nat.* And it is mine to listen to you.

*Ott.*



*Ott.* Your feelings are so like love —

*Nat.* Brothers and sisters will be like each other.

*Ott.* You stand on the brink of a precipice.

*Nat.* It don't yet make me giddy.

*Ott.* Because it is strewed over with roses.

*Nat.* Then keep me back.

*Ott.* There is only one way to save you.

*Nat.* Which ?

*Ott.* Never to be alone with him.

*Nat.* But I can't run away from him.

*Ott.* For the future I'll attend you as if I were your shadow.

*Nat.* Do so; and if you should now and then think that you are troublesome to me, never mind it.

*Ott.* You may grumble as long as you please; I'll hang on your arm like a lump of lead. Now tell me, have you found a key to your father's secret ?

*Nat.* Oh, he wanted to make a lawyer of him.

*Ott.* Of whom ?

*Nat.* Of young Wacker.

*Ott.* Good God! I am speaking of your brother.

*Nat.* Oh, he is very well.

*Ott.* Sure!—Has he written ?

*Nat.* I believe he has.

*Ott.* You only believe ?

*Nat.* Let me alone, and be quiet: my father is in a good humour, and consequently nothing has happened that should give you uneasiness.

*Ott.* But what does he conceal from us — ?

*Nat.* Suffer him to indulge his whim. Every man has his whims; and he is so kind—so good a man——!—He has shaken young Wacker by the hand !

Ott. I hope he has not been wounded.

Nat. Two scars are left.

Ott. Scars!

Nat. One on his forehead, and another on his cheek.

Ott. Have you seen him?

Nat. Good heavens! he but just now left me.

Ott. Your brother?

Nat. Oh! who talks of my brother? [Exit.

## SCENE V.

OTTILIA *alone.*

Ott. Her soul is engaged with only one object. Love is a spoiled child, who grudges every thing to his brothers, and wants to have all to himself.—Patience, Ottilia!—Have pity on the sufferings of a stranger.—Thou too hast a brother; a father and a brother! and how often does the image of the husband banish the other two from thy heart!—[*She leans with a sorrowful air on the window.*]—Thou beautiful tranquil morning, cast a friendly smile on the hoary old man from whom a penitent daughter weeps at a distance!—Behold the busy vintagers! with what activity they perform their labour on yon distant hill covered with vines! Their mirthful songs are wafted hither by the wind!—Oh! they feel no oppression from either sorrow or guilt!—Was not that old Wacker who just now entered?—I am afraid of the rude old man; and yet he interests me. His destiny—his native land—my suspicions—— If we only understood each other——

SCENE

## SCENE VI.

*Enter WACKER.*

*Wack. [crosses the stage, going towards the Count's apartment.]*

*Ott. Mr. Wacker, a word with you.*

*Wack. What are your commands, madam?*

*Ott. I must previously ask your pardon, lest my question should appear impertinent curiosity.*

*Wack. If the question concerns me, it is hardly worth while to be impertinent.*

*Ott. Are you a native of Germany?*

*Wack. Of Germany?—Oh yes; I am any thing you please.*

*Ott. You go about the bush, Mr. Wacker.*

*Wack. I used formerly to go straight forward; but I once had the misfortune to run my head against a post.*

*Ott. Nothing but the most lively interest in your welfare could induce me to ask this question.*

*Wack. You are interested, I suppose, for every man, and believe him upon his word, nay even without his word.*

*Ott. I am desirous to know which is your native country.*

*Wack. [with a sarcastic smile.] Native country! I have none.*

*Ott. But you had one, I presume?*

*Wack. I once was fool enough to think so.*

*Ott. Am I mistaken if I take you for a Corsican?*

*Wack. [endeavouring to conceal a certain kind of embarrassment] To be sure; for there are no longer Corsicans.*

E 3

*Ott.*

Ott. This sarcastic remark confirms my suspicion.

Wack. Countess, if your suspicion were just, it would be generous of you to drop the subject.

Ott. You are unhappy !

Wack. Why ?—I am old enough to be convinced, that we are born to wish, and that we must die to obtain. When I was a little boy, I once requested my nurse to fetch down the moon. I cried and squalled because I absolutely wanted to play with the moon with composure, and never entertain the least idea of putting it into my pocket.

Ott. Full grown children will sometimes endeavour to obtain things still more distant than the moon. And where is the man, who, once in his life at least, has not entertained some wish of the like kind ?

Wack. Once is pardonable, because the eye may be deceived, and the knowledge of distances is the result of experience. But whoever more than once stakes his fortune, his life, his honour, for virtue, liberty, patriotism—or whatever other names are given to those constellations that wander over our heads, and yet scarcely transmit to us a faint ray of borrowed light—whoever does so, deserves, like Socrates, to empty the poisoned cup, or, like the conqueror at Marathon, to end his days in a jail.—You see I have worked myself up into a passion. I thought I only despised mankind; and, alas ! I hate them.

Ott. Were I a man, I would entreat you to make me your confidant.

Wack. Your sex does not prevent me : for I have been oftener deceived by my own sex than by women.—[*What follows he speaks with emotion*] The only perfect creature, I ever knew

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knew upon earth, was a woman ;—and in your face, Countess ! I behold features nearly allied to those of that angel. Were there not a kind of confidence which resembles complaint, as complaint resembles begging, that eye, that melancholy smile upon your cheek, might draw my secret from my bosom. But he who with vain confidence tortures a worthy soul, with no other view than, cuckoo like, to talk of himself, destroys his last support ; the consciousness of that hidden power which enables him to say within himself : I sustain a heavy load, and you don't see it.

*Ott.* [*Is deeply affected, and, after a pause, addresses him in the Corsican language.*] I entreat my unhappy countryman to give me his confidence.

*Wack.* [*Seems much surprised, and confused. Stares at the Countess, and replies abruptly.*] The Count has sent for me. [*Exit.*]

## SCENE VII.

*OTTILIA alone.*

Yes, he is a Corsican ! and perhaps a greater man than he wishes to appear.—But high or low, that's all one. In a strange country we take notice of every peasant whom at home we might perhaps overlook. He speaks our language, and the tone of his voice recalls to our remembrance the shadowy forms of times that are now gone. If he only name a person that was dear to us, a town where we resided, or a spot where we are happy, he is our kinsman. He is our kinsman, because he carries us back, as if by magic, to the period of our infancy, when we were related to all the world, and

used

used to shake hands with every friendly face we met.—I must get better acquainted with this strange man. I must remove the flinty covering with which disappointed confidence has intrusted his heart. He will perhaps reward my perseverance with some account of my father.—Perhaps he knows him—has met with him somewhere ; or can tell where he is. Alas ! poor heart, do not beat with such violence. It is all mere conjecture. [Exit.]

## SCENE VIII.

[*An avenue of limes in the garden.*]

FELIX alone.

Am I at length alone ?—not seen by any strange eye ?—People are so inquisitive, they wish to see every thing, to hear every thing ? And why ? to criticise, to jeer, or to give their sapient opinions. That done, they turn round on their heel and walk off.—No ! this knot shall never be profaned by the eye of a stranger ; here, under this lime-tree, I can without embarrassment press it to my lips ; I can here with tears of joy revive the obliterated marks of those she shed for me.—Thou shalt repose on my bosom, and be the talisman of virtue ; give me a cheerful mind in my sufferings ; and lie heavy on my breast, when an ignoble sentiment shall debase the heart that beats beneath thee.

## SCENE IX.

Enter ROSINA.

Ros. So I have found you at last, Mr. Wacker ? I have been looking for you all the morning.

Fel.

*Fel.* It is but just this moment that I have found myself.

*Ros.* Found yourself? You joke; can one lose oneself?

*Fel.* O yes!

*Ros.* I never lost myself yet in my life.

*Fel.* I wish you may be able to say the same thing ten years hence!

*Ros.* [counting on her fingers.] Ten and thirteen make twenty-three.

*Fel.* What are you counting?

*Ros.* Fourteen, I would say. Sure, sure, on St. Peter and St. Paul's day I shall be fourteen years old.

*Fel.* Already so old?

*Ros.* Next Easter I shall go to confess.

*Fel.* And what has Rosina to confess?

*Ros.* Why, my sins.

*Fel.* Let's hear?

*Ros.* Aye sure; but that won't do.

*Fel.* Why not?

*Ros.* You are too young.

*Fel.* But I have read old books.

*Ros.* No matter. What are my sins to you? You can't absolve me from them.

*Fel.* You shall reckon them up before me, that you mayn't forget them.

*Ros.* Once—it was just at our fair—we were dancing and making merry; and so I forgot to give our goldfinch its food, and the poor thing was starved.

*Fel.* Aye, that was wicked.

*Ros.* Nay, it was very cruel. But I cried a good deal about it.

*Fel.* What more?

*Ros.* I twice threw sugar into old Betty's milk, and she churned all day long to no purpose. But I will do so no more.

*Fel.*

*Fel.* Well, then, we shall let that pass.

*Ros.* But the worst is to come.

*Fel.* The worst ?

*Ros.* Last Christmas I broke a dish—my father was in a passion—and—I am ashamed to tell you—it was a naughty trick—I accused the maid of it.

*Fel.* And what was the consequence ?

*Ros.* My father was going to give the girl a box on the ear ; but I would rather have had a dozen of blows myself. Stop ! stop ! cried I—I did it ;—and smack ! I had a box on the ear ; and I was properly served.—Wasn't I ?

*Fel.* Very properly.

*Ros.* I also begged the poor maid's pardon.

[*Natalia appears at the back part of the stage, seeing Felix and Rosina together, withdraws, but soon returns, and listens.*]

*Ros.* But I was very silly to tell you of this naughty trick. Now you won't love me any more.

*Fel.* That would be no great loss.

*Ros.* Oh, I am very fond of you indeed ! When you were so ill, I could laugh and jeer when I come to see you. But at home, in my little apartment, I was like to cry my eyes out.

*Fel.* Was you indeed, my worthy girl ?

*Ros.* And I love the young Countess twice as well ever since she inquired so eagerly after you, and was so impatient till I came.

*Fel.* [*with emotion.*] Was she ?

*Ros.* Once—I hav'n't told you that yet. She has forbidden me.

*Fel.* Be quick ! What ?

*Ros.* But, pray, don't betray me.

*Fel.* No, no !

[*Natalia*



[Natalia is confused, and retires, but soon returns.]

*Ros.* I, however, cannot conceive why she should forbid me—

*Fel.* No matter. Only tell.

*Ros.* One evening we were on the little hill, yonder by the chestnut-grove; from which a person can see in at your window.

*Fel.* Is that all?

*Ros.* There she stood for almost half an hour. But your curtains were down.

*Fel.* (*hiding the emotions of his joy.*) You little fool! It is very airy there.

*Ros.* Yes, it was so airy, that it made my teeth chatter.

*Fel.* The fine moonlight—

*Ros.* It was as dark as pitch. No, no; I am not quite so stupid neither. I always think it is very fortunate that the Countess is a great lady, and that you are only Mr. Wacker.

*Fel.* Why so?

*Ros.* Why, if the Countess was only a poor gardener's daughter, like me—

*Fel.* What then?

*Ros.* Poor! I can't say that either; I am indeed no more than a gardener's daughter; but not poor for all that. My father is a careful man; he has saved a little money; we might at any time take a handsome farm.

*Fel.* (*immersed in thought.*) So?

*Ros.* And my father is very fond of you.

*Fel.* So?

*Ros.* He says, you seem to be a steady sober young man; and—it is a pity, he says, that you don't apply yourself to gardening, as you are already pretty well acquainted with the business: and he says that you want only to be helped on a little,

a little, and that he is daily getting older, and would be glad, he says, to meet with somebody that he could confide in; and I am too young yet, he says, to be entirely trusted; and he says—aye, I can't tell you all he says.

*Fel.* (*absent.*) So? And what do you say?

*Ros.* (*sighing.*) I say nothing at all.

*Fel.* But didn't the cool evening air hurt you?

*Ros.* We were in the room when he said so.

*Fel.* Didn't you talk of the chestnut-trees and the hill?

*Ros.* Ah! the Countess? I had almost forgot her.--She desired me to tell you, by all means to call on her, the first time you went abroad.

*Fel.* And so you tell me only now?

*Ros.* We have been chatting so much—and I thought that you liked to be with me.—Don't you like to be with me?

*Fel.* Oh yes, child!

*Ros.* Pray, don't call me child. It would appear as if I were, God knows, how little. On St. Peter and St. Paul's day I shall be fourteen. The steward's Betsy is only one year older than I, and she is going to be married.

*Fel.* Indeed!

*Ros.* I must go home now; or else my father will scold. Farewell, dear Mr. Wacker.

*Fel.* Adieu, dear Rosina.

*Ros.* Don't you look at me?

*Fel.* (*assuming a friendly air.*) Farewell! farewell!

*Ros.* Look'ee—see what a beautiful rose. My father to-day put it into my little basket, and I was to carry it to the Countesses; but I laid it aside for somebody.

*Fel.* For whom?

*Ros.*

*Ros.* Why—If you desired me to give it you—

*Fel.* Would you give it me with pleasure?

*Ros.* Here, here! I culled it myself, and on that occasion ran a few thorns into my fingers. But that don't signify, if it only affords you pleasure. [*She nods to him in a friendly manner, and exit.*]

## SCENE X.

FELIX, NATALIA.

(*Whilst Felix is engaged in the following Soliloquy, Natalia approaches, as if involuntarily; then retires, and comes back.*)

*Fel.* She came to see me—Fortunate Camillo!—Dar'st thou flatter thyself with the glorious idea that something more than pity warms the bosom of that angel?—She came to see me!—From yonder hill she gazed at me—thought of me—was occupied with me during the cool evening-hour;—and I this very day walked past that hill, as if it had been nothing else than a common heap of earth planted with trees!—Oh! I did not know that she had hallowed the spot by her presence!—I did not know that it was to become my favourite abode, the altar of my devotion; from which, during the sweet gloom of twilight, the most ardent vows for Natalia's happiness shall rise to the evening star!—Natalia! Natalia!—let's forth to the lovely hill!—[*He turns quickly round, and sees Natalia standing before him. He shrinks back, trembles, and casts his eyes downwards.*]

Natalia casts a timid side glance at him, where her face appears covered with the graceful blushes of virgin innocence.

*Felix* slowly ventures to raise his eyes towards her.

F

Natalia

Natalia looks at him with inexpressible tenderness.

Felix throws himself at her feet, drops the rose, lays hold of her hand, which he covers with ardent kisses, then rises and runs off precipitately.

Natalia stands as if fixed to the ground. After some pause she stoops to pick up the rose, places it on her bosom with a sigh, and slowly withdraws.

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## ACT III.

### SCENE I.

*A Hall in the Castle.*

ROSINA, a SERVANT.

*(The Servant is busy in the room, Rosina comes in crying.)*

Serv. What is the matter with you, Miss Rosina?

Ros. Nothing.

Serv. But you cry!

Ros. What is that to you?

Serv. I am hurt to see such a pretty girl cry.

Ros. If I am pretty, that's nothing to you neither.

Serv. How unkind you are!

Ros. Where is Lady Natalia?

Serv. With her father.

Ros. Dear John, be so good as to call her. Only tell her, that I have something very important to say to her.

Serv. You have not deserved that of me, Miss; but I love you for all that. I am going. *[Exit.]*

SCENE



## SCENE II.

ROSINA *alone.*

This fellow tells me that I am pretty; I think he doesn't speak truth. Mr. Wacker never told me so. If I were pretty, and not so ignorant, he certainly would not leave us.—[*Sighing.*]—It is a pity the world is so wide, and that people should wander so much about in it. Here there are water and mountains; there forests and robbers. He may be drowned—fall over a precipice—lose his way—be plundered—nay murdered!—then I shall never see him more!—Oh! I wish he had rather continued sick!—those were happy days when he was sick.

## SCENE III.

*Enter NATALIA.*

*Nat.* [*basily, and frightened.*] What's the matter, Rosina? You cry! Ah, my God! what has happened?

*Ros.* He will go.

*Nat.* Who.

*Ros.* Naughty man! He is scarcely recovered, yet he will go, and in such a hurry as if he had run mad all at once.

*Nat.* Whither?

*Ros.* How should I know?—Alas! the world is wide enough.

*Nat.* Does he mean to travel?

*Ros.* He is already packing up.

*Nat.* What! to-day?

*Ros.* Within an hour.

F 2

*Nat.*

*Nat.* Go, Rosina, be quick! tell him immediately to repair to the chestnut avenue. I must speak to him.

*Ros.* But he won't speak to you.

*Nat.* Not speak to me?

*Ros.* No! I have just now myself entreated him. 'Dear Mr. Wacker, said I, pray stay with us. A'n't you happy here? Every body loves you, and I above all, and the Countess too, and——'

*Nat.* You gossip!—but go on.

*Ros.* Then he said: 'I can't stay!' And then he clapped his hand to his forehead, and muttered something which I couldn't understand. When I saw him carry out his portmanteau, I was so affected. 'Pray, do speak first with the Countess,' said I—'You are scarcely well; you hav'n't yet recovered your strength. What will become of you when you get among perfect strangers? You may chance to be taken ill on the road in some paltry village; may be among heretics, without attendance, without any body to nurse you, without a clergyman to comfort you.—No! I am sure our gracious Countess will not permit it. Do speak to her.'

*Nat.* And he wouldn't?

*Ros.* By no means. 'I have spoken too much to her already,' said he.

*Nat.* Go, run; watch him; don't leave him a moment; don't lose sight of him. I will endeavour to steal out; in half an hour I shall be in the garden.

*Ros.* Very well. I'll cling to his arm; lay hold of the skirts of his coat; and if he takes it amiss I will tell him that you ordered me.

[*Going.*]

*Nat.* [*aside.*] Good heavens! what must I do?

*Ros.*

*Ros.* [returns.] I had almost forgot; here is a note for you.

*Nat.* From him?

*Ros.* He wrote it on the hill.

*Nat.* Quick! quick! [*She opens and reads it aside*—“The wretch, who ventured to love you, now punishes himself, and flies. He will be happy if you forgive him, proud if your pity attends his flight.”—*[She is in the greatest agitation, walks up and down irresolute; then tears a leaf out of her pocket-book, writes a few words in it, and gives it to Rosina]*—Give him this.

*Ros.* Will he stay when he has read it?

*Nat.* Perhaps he may; at least till the evening.

*Ros.* A reprieve!

*Nat.* My father goes to bed at nine o'clock. Soon after nine I shall be in the chestnut-avenue.

*Ros.* And if he is then gone?

*Nat.* My dear girl, if you love me, don't let him go.

*Ros.* If I could but keep him, all would be will.—I am very fond of you, but still sonder of myself. ~

[Runs away.]

## SCENE IV.

NATALIA alone.

What have I done?—A rendezvous—at the evening-hour!—Were that known!—and, what is more—my father!—Anguish and love—duty and gratitude—Poor heart!

F 3

SCENE

*Ros.*

## SCENE V.

*Enter OTTILIA.*

*Ott.* Dear sister, your father is scolding, because you have not yet returned.

*Nat.* Oh Ottilia! I have again done a foolish thing.

*Ott.* I knew you wouldn't stop at the first.

*Nat.* He will go——

*Ott.* Your hero?

*Nat.* He loves me——

*Ott.* And tells you so?

*Nat.* Read. *[Gives her the note.]*

*Ott.* *(after having read it.)* That's a prudent step of his.

*Nat.* Curse on your cool prudence!

*Ott.* It is a noble action.

*Nat.* Oh yes, very noble! To save a poor girl's life—distract her head and heart, and—then run away—Very noble!

*Ott.* But what will become of you?

*Nat.* If he goes, he must be a beggar, and I shall die of a broken heart.

*Ott.* And if he stays?

*Nat.* If he stays!—Oh Ottilia! if he stays, time and love have worked many a miracle.

*Ott.* Poor girl! if nothing but a miracle can save thee.

*Nat.* The only thing that no treasure can buy he possesses. All the rest may be purchased.

*Ott.* Your father's blessing too?—You know him.

*Nat.* And for that very reason—because I know him—he is fond of me.

*Ott.*



*Ott.* Still sonder perhaps of his principles, which have grown up with him.

*Nat.* Prejudice!

*Ott.* So much the worse. People adhere with more obstinacy to their prejudices than to their principles.

*Nat.* And shall I tell you what I have been dreaming?

*Ott.* First a miracle, and then a dream!—  
Oh love! love!

*Nat.* Don't jeer! These mysterious people are something more than they appear. The manner in which the old man begged to be employed here; the noble pride with which he behaved; the education of his son, and a thousand trifles more, which can only be felt—

*Ott.* All very true; and I must confess, that, if that be your dream, I in some measure dream it also. But—

*Nat.* Reserve your buts, till I have spoken to him.

*Ott.* You will not, I hope—

*Nat.* Why not?

*Ott.* When? where?

*Nat.* This evening, in the garden.

*Ott.* And your father—

*Nat.* He'll be gone to bed.

*Ott.* And decency?

*Nat.* He ventured his life for me, and I must be punctual to the hour.

*Ott.* What is it you want of him?

*Nat.* I wish to know who he is; to request that he will tell me his rank.

*Ott.* And suppose we are mistaken, and he be no more than plain Mr. Wacker?

*Nat.* Then—Oh Sister!—then the peace of my mind is gone for ever.

*Ott.*

*Ott.* Then save at least your fair reputation.

*Nat.* You shall go along with me ; you shall be a witness.

*Ott.* If you wish it.

*Nat.* Neither his heart nor mine has the least cause to object even to a stranger being a witness.

*Ott.* Hush ! Your father is coming. We had quite forgot him.

## SCENE VI.

*Enter COUNT.*

*Count.* So this is the way, children.—You leave me quite to myself.

*Ott.* You were so immersed in your maps—

*Count.* True—I am obliged to make some little arrangements respecting the operations of the war. [*Jocosely.*] I have thrown two bridges across the Danube, and ordered a body of troops to march over them to take the enemy in flank.

*Ott.* Would it not be better to conclude a peace ?

*Count.* If the enemy would send us such a lovely negociator.

*Ott.* The newspapers then would indeed be less interesting.

*Count.* But the harvest and the vintage would be gainers.

*Ott.* When Francis by your side walks thro' the corn-fields—

*Count.* And, instead of trying his sabre on the heads of the Turks, mows down the heads of thistles.

*Ott.* And still, my dear father ! you conceal from me what you know of him ?

*Count.*

*Count.* Still, my dear daughter! I do so.

*Ott.* Am I then to have one sleepless night more?

*Count.* No.

*Ott.* Shall I know, then, before I retire to rest?

*Count.* Yes.

*Ott.* Assure me on your word of honour!

*Count.* I do.—[*Aside*] He won't stay out, I presume.—[*Aloud and archly*] But whether you will sleep the better for your information, that I cannot vouch.—[*Aside, whilst looking at his watch*] He should be arrived by this time.—  
[*To Natalia*] What do you stand moping for in that corner?

*Nat.* [*roused from deep thought.*] I—my dear father?—

*Count.* Yes, you, my dear daughter! I think you hav'n't heard a single word of our conversation.

*Nat.* Who, I?—Oh yes!

*Count.* What were we talking of?

*Nat.* The approach of peace.

*Count.* Very right! of the peace that was concluded in my closet. Child! child! what is going on in your brain? You used to romp about and entertain us with songs all day long; for the last month I hav'n't heard a merry stanza from you.

*Nat.* Oh! the war—brother Francis—

*Count.* Nonsense! There is war every where. Where there are no soldiers in the field, people will destroy one another with fasting; and a person may die while taking a walk.

*Nat.* Witness myself.

*Count.* Had it not been for young Wacker—

*Nat.* [*cheered up.*] Ah true! had it not been for him—

*Count.*

*Count.* You might have been in a bad situation.

*Nat.* The consequence must have been death! certain death!

*Count.* I am only sorry that——

*Nat.* [*quick.*] What, dear father?

*Count.* I have been speaking to the old man——

*Nat.* Concerning his son?

*Count.* Both the father and the son are strange characters.—Mr. Wacker, said I, your son has been doing a very noble action.—“Not that I know of.”—The deuce! he has saved my daughter’s life.—“I am told so, and am glad of it.”—Well, wasn’t that a noble action?—“No! To speak in general, there is no noble action; for every man acts from selfish motives.”

*Nat.* I hope you told him——

*Count.* But your son asks for no recompence.

*Nat.* And consequently makes an exception to his misanthropic rule.

*Count.* He would not allow that. “There is an interest in this case too; but no mean, no sordid interest.”

*Nat.* And what is it, pray?

*Count.* I asked him the same question.—“Why,” replied he, “I don’t know. The human heart has more folds than a lady’s fan, but it cannot be expanded with the same ease. The Countess is handsome”—A curtsy, Miss! —“My son is young; he has eyes, and a heart; that alone is often sufficient.”

*Nat.* [*embarrassed.*] Mere words.

*Count.* I could not help laughing. Aye, said I, if you call that selfishness. “What else is it? One person takes delight in hoards of gold, and another in a kind look; neither of them deceives, and yet each of them doats only on the



his own dear self. The whole difference is, that the one feeds his darling upon nectar, and the other upon coarse viands." In this manner we kept arguing almost an hour; for you know, that, though I take the world for a wretched piece of workmanship, I love mankind with my whole heart.

*Nat.* So he approves the caprice of his son?

*Count.* He at last said: "My son is an egotist, as we are all; but when he sells for reward the pleasure with which a good action inspires his bosom, he is an ordinary egotist, and no son of mine." In short, our gratitude must take him by surprise; if it knock openly at his door, he will keep it bolted.

*Nat.* I am only afraid he will deprive us of every possible means; for—as I have just now learned by a third person—he is going to leave us.

*Count.* In that case we shall have the father here, and a good son finds an ample reward in the happiness which he confers on his parents.

*Nat.* True!——

*Count.* The father shall see that we are not unmindful of his son's actions.

*Nat.* You will then suffer him to go?

*Count.* Why not? I have no right to detain him.

*Nat.* Without assistance? exposed to want?

*Count.* But I can't go on the high road, clap a pistol to his breast, and force him to take my money. [*Looking at his watch, shaking his head, and muttering.*] Hm! hm!

*Nat.* What is it o'clock, dear father?

*Count.* Almost nine.—[*Aside*] He must now be here soon.

*Nat.* [*uneasy.*] What, already so late!

*Count.*

*Count.* [*aside.*] No skirmish has prevented him, I should think.

*Nat.* Father, do you sup to-night !

*Count.* No.

*Nat.* Then give me leave to wish you good repose. [*Attempting to kiss his hand.*]

*Count.* Whither are you going ?

*Nat.* I am so drowsy—

*Count.* Nonsense ! What a fine evening—how refreshing the air. I have ordered all the windows of my apartment to be opened. I will go thither and sit down in my elbow-chair, and you shall read to me an hour.

*Nat.* (*startled.*) Read to you ?

*Count.* Yes; read to me.—(*To Ottilia*) You must come along with us also, daughter; we shall then be quite comfortable.

*Nat.* Excuse me, dear father ! I am so hoarse—I have caught cold——

*Count.* So suddenly ?

*Nat.* Three days ago.

*Count.* I have observed nothing of it. Well then we shall sit with the windows open, and listen to the nightingale.

*Nat.* With the windows open !—The evening air——

*Count.* You know, Natalia ! that I can't bear these affected airs. A girl of your age ought to wash herself in the dew, and bathe in the fog, without fear of hurting her nerves. Don't be obstinate; I am waiting for you.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE

## SCENE

NATALIA, OTTILIA.

Nat. Here is fine work !

Ott. What's to be done now ?

Nat. I promised to be at the place soon after nine.

Ott. The old man will not let us go before midnight.

Nat. [*musing a few moments.*] We have only one method left.

Ott. What ?

Nat. You, my dear Ottilia ! must go in my stead.

Ott. But your father has expressly desired me to accompany you.

Nat. I'll find an excuse. I'll say that your child has been crying—that it won't fall asleep—that you are uneasy—that you will come by and by.

Ott. But I don't know the young man at all.

Nat. Then you ought to thank me for the opportunity I give you of being acquainted with him.

Ott. What must I tell him ?

Nat. Whatever you please. Whatever your friendship for me may suggest. He must wait for me—even till midnight, if necessary.

Count. [*calling from behind the scenes.*] Natalia !

Nat. Coming directly, dear father ! —Go, go, my sweet sister ! In your hands I deposit my peace of mind ; if you suffer him to depart, I shall do a third foolish thing, and run after him.

[*Exit.*]

G

SCENE

## SCENE VIII.

OTTILIA *alone.*

That indeed would be the most foolish of all.—I have accepted this office with great reluctance.—Where will it all end?—What can I say to him?—And yet, if he be what Natalia takes him for, my task is not easy; but it is soon learned. I will encourage him to persist in his prudent resolution. I will give him to understand—if he has not considered it already—that his presence is dangerous to Natalia's happiness. This to a noble-minded youth will be quite sufficient to hasten his departure.—And so this event may give birth to a good action. At the same time, I may be permitted to think of my own concerns. I will sound him. The son, perhaps, is more open than the father.—He is going to travel—his road may lead to my native country.—He may take my letters—make inquiries.—Be quick, Ottilia! chance seems to favour thee. *[Hastens away.]*

## SCENE IX.

*An avenue of chestnut-trees, a moon-light night.*

*Fel.* I entreat you, Rosina, to leave me.

*Ros.* Yes, if you will promise not to run away.

*Fel.* I promise you not to set out before midnight.

*Ros.* Swear.

*Fel.* Upon my honour!

*Ros.* Oh, that is no serious oath. Swear by all the saints.

*Fel.* *(Smiling.)* Well, be it so—By all the saints!

*Ros.*



*Ros.* If you set out now, you will be sure to break your neck before you reach the first stage.

## SCENE X.

*FELIX alone.*

[*Pulling out Natalia's note.*]—"Can he, how loves me, fly from me?—He who loves me will obey me. Wait for me in the chestnut-avenue till nine."—Yes, Natalia! I will obey thee!—thou wilt increase the agony of my departure—but it is the first command thou hast deigned to impart to me. I will obey thee, were my life at stake!—Something rustles—somebody approaches—it is she!—[*Advancing a few steps, he suddenly startles*] Hah! my father!

## SCENE XI.

*Enter WACKER.*

*Wack.* What, my son! How strangely you look!

*Fel.* How, dear father?

*Wack.* This whole day you have been fauntering about like one in a dream; have answered all my questions at cross-purposes; fixed your staring eyes on the ground; or looked at me with a sorrowful aspect that seemed to forebode some misfortune. And, in the last place, the manner in which you this evening wished me good night—your hand shook when you grasped mine—and—if the twilight did not deceive me, the tears stood in your eyes—

*Fel.* No, my dear father!—the remains only my weakness—the consequence of my illness.

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*Wack.*

*Ros.*

*Wack.* Camillo, you are brooding over some scheme.

*Fel.* [continuing to look about him with uneasiness.] Can you be apprehensive of any mean action from your son ?

*Wack.* No ; but you deceive me.

*Fel.* How can you imagine so ?

*Wack.* Have you nothing then to say ?

*Fel.* The evening air will hurt your lungs.

*Wack.* Let my heart be your care, not my lungs.—Have I forfeited your confidence ?

*Fel.* What a question !

*Wack.* Are you not my friend, as much as I am yours ?

*Fel.* Whence this mistrust ?

*Wack.* You know, how and when I lost all trust in man ; but must I lose all trust too in my son ?

*Fel.* Never, never !

*Wack.* Have you nothing to say to me ?

*Fel.* [is embarrassed, and remains silent.]

*Wack.* Look at me—What is the purport of this letter ?

*Fel.* (startled.) This letter——

*Wack.* Addressed to me. It is yet unopened. Why does a son write to his father ? What can it be that a son will not venture to say freely to his father ?

*Fel.* Nothing criminal, father ?—I swear—by heaven——

*Wack.* I was much struck with your conduct all this day. I retired to rest, and could enjoy no repose. My anxiety drove me from bed ; gloomy suspicion conducted me to your chamber ; there I found a portmanteau filled with linnen, and, on the table, this letter. I was going to open it, but was not able. My knees trembled.

trembled. Oh! thought I, is the cup of bitterness not yet filled up? Can my son pour into it the last drop? Should that be the case, he shall at least have the courage to do so in my presence. I then went in search of you. Here I am—take your letter, look me in the face, and without hesitation let me know its contents.

*Fel.* I must—oh my father!—I must—

*Wack.* Travel? is it so? Your portmanteau announced that plainly enough. The old, unfortunate, exiled father will live for ever: the patience of the spirited youth is exhausted. Fool that I was, to think there still existed a living creature who would not forsake me at the hour of death!

*Fel.* Hear me!

*Wack.* And to forsake me thus? thus clandestinely?

*Fel.* You yourself will approve my resolution.

*Wack.* Had you been sure of that, you would not have behaved in this undutiful manner.

*Fel.* Father, you wrong me—mere weakness—the horrors of a separation—

*Wack.* Such is the way of all mankind—even of the best:—a folly, a crime, any thing! if they can only perpetrate it with their faces turned aside.

*Fel.* When Timoleon turned aside his face, he was pitied by the whole world.

*Wack.* No display of words, pray; I want argument.

*Fel.* Well then—my affections are fixed on the young Countess.

*Wack.* Is that all?

*Fel.* She loves me.

*Wack.* Folly!

*Fel.* May I venture to offer my hand ?

*Wack.* Beggar !

*Fel.* May I tell her, who I am ?

*Wack.* Madman !

*Fel.* Well, what must I do ?

*Wack.* [after a pause] Shun her.

*Fel.* My father has pronounced the sentence—

*Wack.* Stop ! don't deceive yourself.—If you are fully convinced—

*Fel.* I am.

*Wack.* If juvenile conceit alone has not—

*Fel.* Juvenile conceit never attends wretchedness——

*Wack.* How do you know her sentiments ?

*Fel.* I have innumerable proof:—

*Wack.* Were they not pity or gratitude ?

*Fel.* I thought so at first.

*Wack.* You suffered external marks of your feelings to appear ?

*Fel.* Our hearts understood each other.

*Wack.* And your lips——

*Fel.* Were silent.

*Wack.* Then keep silence, struggle, shun her presence, and remain.

*Fel.* If my father's riper experience ordains it so, I shall obey.

*Wack.* Your sufferings here are quite out of the question.

*Fel.* I voluntarily suffer.

*Wack.* But the peace of mind of our benefactor's daughter——

*Fel.* That was the very object I meant to attain by my flight.

*Wack.* Whether there be only a garden or a whole quarter of the world left between you, it will make no difference.

*Fel.* But if she wishes to see me ?

*Wack.* She won't.

*Fel.*



*Fel.* But if love has already silenced the dictates of prudence and virgin timidity!—If, in the gloom of night, she wished to have an interview with me?

*Wack.* She will not.

*Fel.* Father, I am here by her own desire.

*Wack.* (*suspicious.*) Without your contrivance?

*Fel.* By the memory of my mother!

*Wack.* Then retire.

*Fel.* [*hesitating.*] What must she think of me?

*Wack.* She will bless your integrity, if not now, at least some time hence.

*Fel.* Oh my father!——

*Wack.* You cannot?—Well, I'll stay also—

*Fel.* Your presence would overcome her.

*Wack.* It is better that I should make her blush, than that she should do so herself.

*Fel.* The youth, who had strength and resolution to leave a father and the idol of his heart, will not forget at present what he owes to duty and honour.

*Wack.* What will you say to her?

*Fel.* That I love her.

*Wack.* Excellent!

*Fel.* That I am destitute of hope—

*Wack.* And consequently destitute of reason.

*Fel.* That she will never—never see me more——

*Wack.* Even if you should stay?

*Fel.* Even if I should stay.

*Wack.* Swear!

*Fel.* With a bleeding heart.

*Wack.* And if she whimpers and cry—

*Fel.* Oh father!

*Wack.* Oh son!—if she cry?—

*Fel.* Then I will tear myself from her, and fly.

*Wack.* Are you able?

*Fel.*

*Fel.* I am.

*Wack.* Your hand——

*Fel.* [*gives him his hand.*] As I am a Pompiliani.

*Wack.* Do not disgrace thy family. Want and misery thy father could bear; disgrace would carry him to his grave.

*Fel.* I know what I owe both to my family and to my own heart.

*Wack.* Never yet did a Pompiliani betray innocence.

*Fel.* And should your son be the first?

*Wack.* Never yet did a Pompiliana repay hospitality with ingratitude.

*Fel.* And your son—

*Wack.* My son will never act unworthy of his ancestors.

*Fel.* But act as he ought, were he even a foundling.

*Wack.* I'll leave you alone with her.

*Fel.* Your confidence strengthens my resolution.

*Wack.* Put her to the test; examine the bud from which thy passion shot up like a plant fostered by some kindly hand in a hot-house. If it be nothing else than pity or gratitude, a candid explanation will shake off the spurious blossom. But if it be more—should she prove attached to you with his whole soul, and if love with his usual caprice has united two hearts which destiny divides—well, then you shall fly; I will then conceal my sorrow, forget my helpless old age, and drive you out myself into the wide world, before the dawn of next morning appears. I shall retire to rest. I shall wait your return. If you must depart, two diamonds which belonged to your mother shall attend you.

you. These, and my blessing, are all I am able to bestow.

*Fel.* Never, father!—I am young and can labour——

*Wack.* Be submissive.—I shall send you to France. If I am not mistaken, that nation will soon wage war against the foes of our country. Your education is finished. Do your enlist in their service. A little money will be necessary, that you may not have the appearance of a banished vagabond. Who can tell but fortune may yet smile on you, and your mother's blessing dwell on these diamonds. Conduct yourself with bravery—get promoted, and avenge your father, who, in the mean time, will here pour forth his prayers for your prosperity. If thy heart and her's stand the ordeal of separation, thou wilt some day return as Pompiliani.

*Fel.* Worthy father! you give me more than diamonds—you give me hope to attend me on my journey.

*Wack.* I see a white figure moving along the avenue. Remember thy duty and our honour.

[*Withdraws.*]

## SCENE XII.

*FELIX alone.*

She comes—but not on wings of love :—she glides slowly from tree to tree.—Now she stops, and turns her eye towards the castle.—This way, Natalia! this way under the shade.—The moon and thy ghostly garb will betray thee.—Now she approaches.—Thou, guardian angel of my honour, watch over this fluttering heart?

SCENE

## SCENE XIII.

*Enter OTTILIA.**(Ottilia appears at a distance, and coughs.)*

*Feb.* Here am I, my dear Countess ! proud of your confidence, warmed by your kindness—

*Ott.* Sir—

*Fel.* The remembrance of this last proof of your goodness will smoothe the rugged path of the fugitive—

*Ott.* What voice !

*Fel.* In the hour of sorrow it will inspire him with a just sense of his own importance.

*Ott.* It is not Natalia, Sir !

*Fel.* *(startled.)* Not Natalia !

*Ott.* My sister-in-law was obliged to stay with her father to bear him company.

*Fel.* What voice !

*Ott.* She sent me before to—

*Fel.* Heavens ! Recollection is roused within me at each sound.—May I presume to ask the name of the unknown fair whom I now address ?

*Ott.* *(embarrassed.)* Every one of his words—Sir—every one of his words—

*Fel.* For heaven's sake ! whoc'er thou art—I had a sister—

*Ott.* And I a brother—

*Fel.* It is her voice !

*Ott.* It is his !

*Fel.* *(Lays suddenly hold of her hand and leads her to a spot lighted by the moon. They anxiously gaze on each other : exclaim at the same time :) It is you ! (and drop into each other's arms.)*

*Ott.* Pleasing dream ! flee not from me !

*Fel.*



*Fel.* Sweet apparition! vanish not from me!

*Ott.* My brother lives!

*Fel.* My sister is happy!

*Ott.* My father lives!

*Fel.* We have sustained no loss!

## SCENE XIV.

FRANCIS, OTTILIA, FELIX.

[*Francis appears, unperceived by them, in the background, and still approaches nearer.*]

*Ott.* The forebodings of my heart have not deceived me!

*Fel.* Genoa! of this treasure thou could'st not rob me.

*Ott.* May the penitent hope for forgiveness?

*Fel.* She may.

*Ott.* O God! then the boldest of my wishes has been heard.

*Fel.* Enchanting voice, which struck my ear for the last time on the banks of the Garonne!

*Ott.* Am I in reality so near thee? Come to the arms of her who, in the intoxication of her joy, is still inclined to doubt—

*Fel.* Beloved Ottilia! (*They embrace each other in rapture.*)

*Fran.* (*calls out aloud.*) Good heavens! it is my wife! (*Draws his sword, and, in his fury, rushes upon Felix.*)

*Ott.* (*throws herself in his arms.*) My husband!

*Fran.* (*pushes her back*) Be gone, serpent!

*Ott.* (*falls to the ground, almost speechless with terror.*) Francis!—it is—

*Fran.* (*to Felix.*) If thou hast arms, defend thyself!

*Fel.*

*Fel.* Stranger! forbear—she is my sister. (*Endeavours to raise her.*)

*Fran.* (*petrified.*) His sister? (*The sword drops from his hand.*)

*Fel.* My lost, my beloved sister! have I again found thee?

*Fran.* Art thou Pompiliani?

*Fel.* Oh! she has fainted!

*Fran.* (*beats his forehead.*) What have I done?

*Fel.* Help! help!

*Fran.* (*throws himself on his knees by Ottilia's side, and takes her in his arms.*) Ottilia! my wife, my beloved wife! (*The curtain drops.*)

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## ACT IV.

*The Scene as in the preceding Act.*

### SCENE I.

FRANCIS, OTTILIA, FELIX.

(*Francis supporting on one arm his wife, and on the other her brother.*)

*Ott.* Now you know the whole.

*Fel.* And in your presence I must blush.

*Ott.* Promise to amend.

*Fran.* I promise you eternal love.

*Ott.* There is no love without confidence.

*Fran.* (*to Felix.*) After the scene which has taken place I can scarcely venture to solicit your friendship.

*Fel.* By my sister's happiness you will ensure it.

*Ott.*

*Ott.* Strive to deserve it ; make amends for your rashness ; give me advice ; and assist my brother.

*Fran.* Possessed of Natalia's affection, he stands in no need of my assistance.

*Fel.* Oh sister ! if you are mistaken---

*Ott.* Am not I her confidant ?

*Fran.* Let us hasten to the castle ! Why should we desert this fortunate discovery till another day ?

*Ott.* But---my father---

*Fel.* I think I see his shadow yonder on the hedge. I dare say his anxiety has driven him from his home. He is certainly come in quest of me---

*Ott.* Oh ! go then, and leave me here alone.

*Fran.* Alone ?

*Ott.* While he is looking for his son, he shall find his daughter.

*Fran.* My dear wife ! would you venture ?

*Ott.* Venture !---What has a daughter to apprehend from a father ? I have found him ; my prayers are heard ; and should I hesitate to embrace his knees ?

*Fran.* But if he behave to you with rudeness ?

*Fel.* He will not.

*Ott.* And if he did ; have we not offended him ?---Go, Francis ! send me my child. It indeed now sleeps ; but no matter. The aspect of the slumbering angel will add strength to my entreaties. Its innocent smiles and my tears---Go ! go ! Methinks I see him approaching.

*Fel.* Sister, your plan is good ; take courage ; and if his tongue be boisterous, cling close to his heart. I know him well.

*Fran.* [*apprehensive.*] Yet it would be better if we kept near---

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*Ott.**Ott.*

*Ott.* No, Francis! A daughter needs no body-guards during an interview with her father Go!

*Fran.* May the blessing of Heaven still attend us for another hour!--[To Felix] Take courage, and follow me.

*Fel.* Wherever we apply may we meet with open hearts!

*Fran.* When to-morrow's sun appears, may we all with joy exclaim: It was not the dream of a fine summer's evening! [Exeunt.]

## SCENE II.

OTTILIA *alone.*

A plan my brother called it!--No; the heart spurns at such stratagems---He is coming---he shall find me unprepared---Away with studied arts! I possess the weapons of nature; she gave tears to the infant to deprecate a parent's wrath---What anguish and love, conscientiousness and repentance of my offence inspire---[Wacker makes his appearance in the back-ground] There he is---[She trembles, and supports herself against a tree.] Wretched being! that I should tremble at the sight of my father!

## SCENE III.

OTTILIA, WACKER.

*Wack.* Are you still here, Camillo? What do I see?---A lady! and quite alone!

*Ott.* Mr. Wacker---

*Wack.* Countess---what brings you hither?

*Ott.* Your son---

*Wack.* He spoke of a meeting---

*Ott.*



*Ott.* Which did not take place.

*Wack.* So much the better.

*Ott.* My sister-in-law remained with her father.

*Wack.* That was proper.—It is not every father who can boast of such a daughter.

*Ott.* The dangers of a passion which militates against the duties.

*Wack.* Oh! I know them, but I don't like to talk on that subject.

*Ott.* [*Aside*] O God! my tongue falters!

*Wack.* What is become of my son?

*Ott.* He is at no great distance.

*Wack.* I hope he has not left you here to apprize me of his departure?

*Ott.* By no means; he retired, that I might speak to you in private.

*Wack.* With me—In private!

*Ott.* My sister's destiny bears so great a resemblance to mine.

*Wack.* To your's?

*Ott.* She loves without her father's approbation.

*Wack.* That seems to be the prevailing fashion among daughters.

*Ott.* This event has again tore open my former wounds.

*Wack.* Such wounds ought never to heal.

*Ott.* I more than ever feel the necessity of enjoying the confidence of a worthy man.

*Wack.* If I am the man on whom you mean to bestow your confidence.

*Ott.* It is you!

*Wack.* I would have you be sparing of it.

*Ott.* As a philanthropist.

*Wack.* I am no philanthropist; but I am your friend. The first moment I beheld your face,

you made an impression on me, which—for want of a better name—I shall call sympathy.

*Ott.* (in an *extasy*.) Heaven grant it may be so!

*Wack.* Your form, the sound of your voice, your mildness, your maternal tenderness and connubial affection—every thing, in short, prejudices me in your favour.

*Ott.* Oh! you give me inexpressible pleasure.

*Wack.* To-day—why should I deny it?—when you addressed me in a language with which I am not unacquainted.

*Ott.* Then you fled from me.

*Wack.* I fled; but the accents with which you conjured me back penetrated to my heart, and have never since quitted it.

*Ott.* Oh! may they remain there for ever!

*Wack.* If you are in earnest, Countess! and if you set any value on the esteem of an old man, don't acquaint me with your history. In me you would find a severe judge.

*Ott.* It is impossible to see kindness and severity united?

*Wack.* My love is confined to very few individuals on earth, and I should be sorry to see the number still diminished.

*Ott.* Errors, that arise from rashness and love!

*Wack.* These are the very errors to which I shew no lenity; for you know, Countess, that not only the actions of mankind but their opinions are all selfish—A man will sooner forgive a crime which does him no hurt, than a rash act by which he is injured.

*Ott.* But, if the best success, though unmerited, is nevertheless.

*Wack.*

*Wack.* No ; you do not belong to the class of those who judge of the merit of an action by its success.

*Ott.* If a wife, even in the embrace of a beloved husband, and amidst the caresses of the infant at her breast, finds no peace, because the heart of a daughter bleeds.

*Wack.* It is virtue's revenge.

*Ott.* If, blest with affluence, I want nothing but the blessing of my father, and if this want alone depresses me below the most abject creature.

*Wack.* Then your repentance is entitled to pity.

*Ott.* If the most excruciating anguish during the lonely night succeeds that pretended cheerfulness under which it is forced to hide itself during the day—If I bathe my infant in tears, while I admit him to my breast, destitute of nourishment, and dried up with sorrow—If I tremble at the least appearance of danger, because trust in God has fled from my troubled conscience.

[*She sobs.*]

*Wack. (affected)* Then I pity you.

*Ott.* And forgive me ?

*Wack.* No.

*Ott.* Oh ! if you were my father,

*Wack.* Then I would not curse a wretch

*Ott.* And forgive me ?

*Wack.* No.

*Ott.* Not even—if, like my father, you had kept your child at a distance from you ever since its infancy ?—If you had never beheld it since it was four years of age ?

*Wack. (startled.)* Since it was four years of age !

*Ott.* If you had demanded the affection of your child from nature alone, instead of obtaining it by that sweet violence, paternal care and tenderness?

*Wack.* (*uneasy.*) Since it was four years of age!

*Ott.* I should detest myself if I attempted to palliate my error. But this much I make bold to attest by the remains of my mother, in this awful hour, that I would not have forsaken my father, had he not forsaken me!

*Wack.* (*with increased uneasiness.*) You are a native of Corsica?

*Ott.* (*with hesitation.*) My mother

*Wack.* Your mother?

*Ott.* My mother was a Corsican.

*Wack.* Then your father was no Corsican? nor are you one yourself?

*Ott.* My mother was—a relation of your's.

*Wack.* Of mine?—Do you know me?

*Ott.* Your son—

*Wack.* Thoughtless youth!

*Ott.* You once loved my mother—

*Wack.* What was her name?

*Ott.* (*trembling*) Her maiden-name was Morosini—

*Wack.* That was the name of my wife.

*Ott.* She bestowed her hand—upon noble—  
Pompiliani—

(*She drops on her knees.*)

*Wack.* What is that.

*Ott.* (*quite exhausted, draws a miniature picture from her bosom.*) Mother! mother! intercede for thy unfortunate daughter! (*Presents the portrait to him in a whining tone.*)

(*Wacker snatches it violently out of her hand, and hastens to a spot lighted by the moon, where, trembling, he gazes at the picture.—Tears start into*



into his eyes. He attempts several times to cast a severe look at Ottilia; she extends her arms, trembling he wipes his eyes, and, overcome with grief, leans against a tree.)

Ott. (*rises, struggling, from the ground, and approaches him with fear.*) My father!

Wack. [*with averted eyes.*] Don't call me so.

Ott. My penance is severe.

Wack. (*sarcastically.*) In the lap of joy.

Ott. God has numbered my tears.

Wack. And weighed thy actions.

Ott. Forgiveness to the penitent!

Wack. Restore to me those hours which sorrow lengthened out into years.

Ott. Forgiveness, father!

Wack. Restore to me my impaired health!

Ott. (*Kneels down, and wrings her hands.*)

Wack. The Countess forgets that her steward is standing before her.

Ott. You punish me with severity.

Wack. An exile, on whose head a reward was set.—Go: betray me to thy seducer! The man who stole the daughter may, for the sake of gold, assassinate the father.

Ott. Oh! this is too cruel!

Wack. [*casting his eyes on the picture.*] Worthy spouse! her first cry was the echo to thy last groan! That she might prove the comfort of my old age, was thy parting wish!

Ott. Oh, be it accomplished! Departed spirit of my mother! give life once more to her lovely features! Re-animate her soft eyes, that she may cast a deep look into my father's heart!

Wack. And there behold how it bled.

Ott. Can nothing move that bosom? melt that heart? not the mother's smile? not the daughter's repentance?—[*Observing the nurse with the child in the back ground.*] Oh! come, my

my son ! thy prattling shall move him!—[Starts up, fetches the child, returns and kneels down.]

*Wack.* (softened.) What is this ?

*Ott.* Thou slumber'st ?—Oh ! sleep not ! Send forth thy infant cries !—the cries of anguish ! that they may penetrate thy grandfather's heart !

*Wack.* (looking down to her, as it were involuntarily.) *Ottilia*—is this thy child ?

*Ott.* It is my child ! your blood !

*Wack.* (more softened.) Take it away.

*Ott.* Without your blessing ?

*Wack.* (careful.) The damp air—the cold,—poor child !

*Ott.* It is not poor, if you love it !—it will not be hurt, if you bless it !

*Wack.* (after a pause, during which he struggles with himself) Is it a boy ?

*Ott.* A boy, that cannot yet fold his little hands, but whom destiny has perhaps chosen to be the avenger of his family—

*Wack.* (roused by these words) Perhaps—(with emotion) Perhaps—Rise !—(After a pause) Lay the child on my arms.

(*Ottilia obeys, trembling with joy.*)

(*Wacker casts a sorrowful look at the child.*)

*Ott.* My child in my father's arms !—This is the happiest moment of my life !

*Wack.* Wipe off that tear, which fell on his face !

*Ott.* Oh no ! no ! with this tear on the infant's cheek my father has cancelled its mother's debt.

*Wack.* Yes !—thou hast overcome me—Nature stood leagued with thee.—May God bless the child !—(Returns the child to the nurse, who retires without being taken notice of.)

*Ott.*

*Ott.* [*throwing herself into his arms.*] And my husband?

*Wack.* He has wounded both my heart and my honour.

*Ott.* He is the father of that child.

*Wack.* Give me time to prepare myself for his arrival.

*Ott.* He is already arrived, and anxiously waits for his father's commands.

*Wack.* [*after some pause.*] Well! I will see him.

*Ott.* [*in an extasy of joy.*] By my father's love, the load which oppressed my heart is now removed; I again breathe with freedom. I weep indeed, but my tears are sweet. Woe to the child, who, loaded with a father's curse, can think of any happiness on earth!

*Wack.* I will see him and put him to the test. I will try whether he be worthy to call a Pom-piliani, father.—[*Offers her his hand.*] Come, conduct me—

*Ott.* [*presses his hand eagerly to her lips.*] Oh God! oh God! I am leading my father!

[*Both exeunt.*]

## SCENE IV.

*The Count's apartment. Sundry books scattered about on the table.*

COUNT, NATALIA.

*Count.* Read, child!

*Nat.* [*yawns.*] I am so drowsy.

*Count.* I am not drowsy at all. Read; choose your own book.

*Nat.*

*Nat.* Dear father, these books are all such insipid stuff——

*Count.* Can you write better ?

*Nat.* I almost think I could.

*Count.* You talk like a reviewer ; for your punishment you shall read one hour more.

*Nat.* [*is uneasy, takes up several books, and reads the titles.*] “Reflections on Death.”

*Count.* No, let that alone ; death comes soon enough at any time.

*Nat.* [*takes up another*] “The Complete Academy of Compliments.”

*Count.* We have no use for these in the country.

*Nat.* [*turning over the leaves of another.*] “Stories of Ghosts.”

*Count.* The Turks are our ghosts.

*Nat.* You see, father, that your bookseller has sent you works not even of so much use as to set one asleep.

*Count.* They are however the latest publications.

*Nat.* I'll turn them over to-morrow, and if I hit upon any thing interesting——

*Count.* [*opens a book himself.*] Here is an opiate. “Choice Curiosities selected from the most celebrated Authors on Dreams.” There, read a couple of dreams.

*Nat.* Good God ! I am almost dreaming myself.

*Count.* Never mind.

*Nat.* [*taking up the book with reluctance*] “Johannes Oporinus, the celebrated printer at Basle, dreamt, that a clock, which struck the hours, dropt from his head upon his breast, and emitted an agreeable sound. Soon after, he was seized with a fit of the apoplexy !”

*Count.*



*Count.* (yawning.) Ay! ay!

*Nat.* Will these specimens do?

*Count.* (half aloud.) Go on.

*Nat.* (reads, vexed.) "A man of rank dreamt that his son had returned from a battle."—I hear somebody in the anti-chamber.

*Count.* (starting up.) Natalia, I am that man of rank! My dream is going to be accomplished.

*Nat.* What! It is perhaps brother Francis.

*Count.* There he is.

## SCENE V.

*Enter FRANCIS.*

*Fran.* (enters precipitately, and throws himself in his father's arms.)

*Count.* Welcome, my brave son!

*Nat.* Welcome, brother!

*Fran.* God bless you, my dear father?—  
God bless you, sister!

*Count.* What are the Turks about?

*Fran.* Exclaiming Allah! and getting their wounds cured.

*Nat.* I never heard the sound of the horse's feet in the court.

*Fran.* I stole through the garden, that I might surprise you.

*Nat.* I now know, dear father, why you didn't choose to go to bed.

*Count.* I was almost tired too.

*Fran.* It is my sister's fault that I didn't come sooner.

*Nat.*

*Nat.* My fault ?

*Fran.* Yes, your's : I have picked up a lover for you on the road.

*Nat.* Very likely—lost by somebody. Well, we shall advertise him in the papers.

*Fran.* He has lost his heart, and hopes to find it with you.

*Count.* Is your sister then so old and so ugly as to be obliged to go a-begging for a swain ?

*Fran.* I'll shew him up to your room, sister. Dear father, participate in my joy ! By the most extraordinary chance in the world I have found my brother-in-law.

*Count.* Young Pompiliani ?

*Fran.* Yes ; he has given me a fraternal embrace.

*Count.* And his father ? for your wife has told me all.

*Fran.* Will not be inexorable.

*Count.* If he be as much softened as I.

*Fran.* And if he has a heart like your's.

*Nat.* My congratulations, dear brother, you shall have to-morrow : at present you must excuse me, for I can scarcely keep my eyes open.

*Fran.* Stay ; my relation concerns you also.

*Count.* Then stay, and listen.

*Nat.* [*very uneasy.*] Permit me at least to go and call your wife.

*Fran.* Time enough.

*Nat.* Excellent ! There is a cool husband for you.

*Count.* Ay, ay, Francis ! I don't like that.

*Fran.* Ottilia will forgive me on her brother's account.

*Nat.* I doubt it.

*Fran.* My brother-in-law has set a price on his friendship.

*Nat.*

*Nat.* How selfish!

*Fran.* A price which you are to pay.

*Nat.* I?

*Fran.* He wishes to have you for his wife.

*Nat.* [*With a sneer*] A mighty honor!

*Count.* [*vexed*] Why all this farce?

*Fran.* Can my father suppose me capable of profaning, by a farce the first happy hour of re-union?

*Count.* What! are you in earnest?

*Fran.* In full earnest.

*Nat.* So much the worse.

*Fran.* Pompiliani is a noble youth, whose heart pants for honor and virtue.

*Nat.* Let him pant, provided he do not pant for me.

*Fran.* He loves you.

*Nat.* He saw me very likely in a dream.

*Fran.* He is poor, I must confess.

*Count.* An honest heart never wants. You know me---but your sister---

*Nat.* I am not fond of invisible sylphs.

*Count.* But they must first be acquainted with each other.

*Fran.* Will you permit him to step in?

*Count.* What! is he here?

*Nat.* Here!---I am apt to think, brother, you have lost your senses.

*Fran.* I understand you: you wish to dress first.

*Nat.* [*impatient*] I will undress and go to bed.

*Fran.* Never fear; you are charming enough even in dishabille. What will you lay that you don't make a conquest of him?

I

*Nat.*

*Nat.* But I have no wish to make a conquest of him. I beg, brother, that you will let me alone.

*Fran.* Sister, be prudent. I ask no more than that you will marry him.

*Nat.* A mere trifle! But I won't marry him.

*Fran.* You must,

*Nat.* My father will never compel me.

*Count.* God forbid!

*Nat.* Well then, I won't! were he even an Adonis.

*Fran.* Never forswear any thing.

*Nat.* But I do forswear.

*Fran.* Hold! hold!—(*Goes to the door, and opens it.*) Step in.—Poor Pompiliani! my sister is an obstinate creature; she won't hear of you.

## SCENE VI.

*Enter FELIX*

*Nat.* (*Shrinks when she discovers him.*)

*Count.* What! our young horse-tamer?

*Fel.* Count, the goodness with which you treat a sister, encourages the brother to appear before you under his true name.

*Count.* So brave a youth is welcome under any name.

*Fran.* (*archly*) Is it so, Natalia?

*Fel.* Do not suffer my discretion, Madam, to make amends for your brother's imprudence.

*Nat.* Sir,

*Count.* But, children, how is all this? Put me a little in the secret. You are Pompiliani? Consequently your father is my steward?

*Fel.* We had the good fortune to meet with an asylum under your roof.

*Count,*



**Count.** Pompiliani the hero, steward of my estates!---Confound it! this is too bad!

**Fel.** Pompiliani the exile, the outlaw; he who by his escape saved the Genoise an additional crime.

**Count.** But he ought also to have saved me a blush.

**Fel.** Pompiliani the beggar, who of all his possessions saved nothing but the knowledge of rural economy, which he acquired on his own estates.

**Count.** Why, if he has lost his estates, he has found mine. If friends have betrayed him, a stranger shall reconcile him with mankind. In future we must form only one family.

**Fran.** Do you hear, Natalia? only one family.

**Nat.** (*Still in a confused suspense.*) Hold your tongue!

**Count.** How is this, Natalia? Your gratitude to the man who saved your life has all of a sudden become mute.

**Nat.** Gratitude has no words.

**Count.** But actions?—Well then, act!

**Nat.** (*casts a timid and significant look at her father.*)

**Count.** (*nodding to her.*) Yes, yes! and may Heaven bless you!

**Fran.** [*seeing that Natalia still hesitates*] Shall I lend you my assistance?

**Nat.** It is not required.—[*To Felix.*] Sir—

**Fran.** The introduction promises but little.

**Fel.** Countess.

**Fran.** In this manner you'll never come to the point.

**Nat.** Are you still bent on travelling?

**Fran.** Your question is very obliging.

**Fel.** The motives of my resolution are not yet removed.

*Fel*

*Fran.* It appears as if you were acquainted already.

*Nat.* I never was offended at the motives—

*Count.* So you were offended? I knew nothing of it.

*Fel.* My sister's good fortune does not entitle me—

*Fran.* The question here is respecting the brother's merit.

*Nat.* That now was sensible.

*Fran.* We have no time to lose with nonsense. It is near midnight.

*Count.* Your sleep is gone, Natalia, it seems.

*Fran.* To be short; what kind of recompence has the saviour of your life deserved?

*Nat.* Any—he needs only ask.

*Fran.* Well then, my dear brother-in-law, do ask!

*Fel.* Nothing, or all.

*Fran.* A curtsy, sister. By all, he means possession of you.

*Nat.* May he ever be of that opinion!

*Fel.* Were my heart laid open before you!—

*Fran.* Thanks to Heaven! the plot is going to be unravelled at last.

*Nat.* If Mr. Wacker—if Pompiliani will promise me not to travel.

*Fel.* [*taking her hand with rapture*] I promise.

*Nat.* (*with graceful embarrassment.*) Then—

*Fran.* Well? then?—

*Nat.* (*gently disengaging herself.*) Then I can, with peace, retire to rest. Good night, dear father!—(*Endeavouring to depart.*)

*Count.* Aye, Natalia!

*Nat.* (*who has already reached the door.*) Permit me—

*Count.* Won't you take the dream-book with you?

*Nat.*

*Nat.* For what purpose?

*Count.* If you should happen to have a sleepless night, and grow tired—

*Fran.* (*who has just opened another book.*) You had better give her “The Stories of Ghosts.”

*Nat.* I wish, brother, you would study the “Complete Academy of Compliments;” you would then use your poor sister with a little more tenderness. [*Runs off.*]

*Count.* Embrace me, my dear son!

*Fel.* Generous man!

*Count.* Where is your sister?

*Fel.* I hope, in the arms of my father.

*Count.* (*To Francis.*) Have you also obtained his forgiveness?

*Fel.* I trust to the voice of nature.

*Count.* Have you not seen him?

*Fran.* My wife and my child were to open the way for me to his heart.

*Count.* Go then, and do your duty.

*Fran.* (*going.*) Hah! here he comes.

## SCENE VII.

*Enter WACKER and OTTILIA.*

*Ott.* Francis! Francis! he has forgiven us.

*Fran.* (*respectfully taking him by the hand.*) Am I permitted with filial reverence—

*Wack.* Hold, young man!—Pardon me, Count, for being so late—

*Count.* (*pressing his hand.*) A couple of years sooner it would indeed have been more welcome.

*Wack.* Events have taken place here—

*Count.* I entreat your forgiveness for my son.

*Wack.*

*Nat.*

*Wack.* Since I became a beggar, my honour has become more irritable—

*Count.* Our children do not address themselves to our honour, but to our hearts. When we have cast anchor in a secure harbour, let us forget past storms. My son is your son-in-law, and your's shall be mine.

*Wack.* I have not been told too much of Hungarian generosity.

*Count.* I am a man of wealth ; my fortune is sufficient for us all.

*Wack.* As long as I stand in no need of bounty, I am determined to accept none.

*Count.* You will some time repay me.

*Wack.* With what ?

*Count.* Your country will not always groan under the yoke of tyranny : a time will come when your claims shall be made good.

*Wack.* Who is to do that ?

*Fran.* I! I, my father! I'll sacrifice my blood and my life to avenge you.

*Wack.* Very Well!—but in vain!

*Fran.* We are going to have peace—I shall then fly to Corsica—

*Wack.* To die on the scaffold.

*Fran.* You don't know—

*Wack.* (with emotion.) What don't I know?

*Fran.* That the brave Corsicans are making a new attempt to shake off the yoke.

*Wack.* (with still greater motion.) To shake off the yoke!

*Fran.* That Lodovico Giaffari—

*Wack.* My friend!

*Fran.* That Count Andrea Ercaldi—

*Wack.* My brother in arms!

*Fran.* Have collected a formidable army.

*Wack.* An army!

*Fran.* Beaten the Genoese—

*Wack.*



*Wack.* Without Pompiliani !

*Fran.* We will go to join them—

*Wack.* (in rapture.) We!—I!—my son !

*Fran.* Your sons.

*Wack.* You will ?

*Fran.* Here is my hand !

*Wack.* Thou wouldst—

*Fran.* Merit your forgiveness.

*Wack.* Be it so ! Wash away the stain of thy base action in the blood of the Genoese. On the coast of Corsica, if thou surviv'st the first bloody battle, I'll press thee to my heart as my son.

*Count.* And when your vengeance is satisfied—

*Wack.* I'll send you back our brave sons.

*Count.* And you ?—

*Wack.* I will die in my native land.

*Ott.* At a distance from your children ?

*Wack.* I am a Corsican !—I will die in my native land !

[*The curtain drops.*]

F I N I S.

*Wack.*



